# REPORT

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE

# 1952
# Conference of the Universities of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

convened by

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals

and held in

THE WILLIAM BEVERIDGE HALL
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON SENATE HOUSE

on

Friday and Saturday December 12th and 13th 1952

*The proceedings of the Conferences of the Home Universities held in* 1947 1948 1949 *and* 1951 *have been published in companion volumes which may be obtained price one shilling and sixpence post free* (1951 *Report two shillings post free*) *from The Secretary The Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth* 5 *Gordon Square London W C* 1. *The* 1946 *and* 1950 *Reports are out of print.*

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THIRD SESSION Saturday afternoon, December 3th

*Subject of Discussion*

**Vacation Employment**

## MEMBERS OF CONFERENCE

### THE FOLLOWING ATTENDED AS UNIVERSITY DELEGATES

*Birmingham.*

H. F. HUMPHREYS, O.B.E., M.C., T.D., D.L., M.B., Ch.B., M.D.S., LL.D., F.D.S., F.S.A., Vice-Chancellor and Principal.

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*Durham.*

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Miss E. M. Spelman, B.A. Part-time Lecturer in Mental Health and Warden of the Florence Boot Hall of Residence

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R. H. Stoughton, D.Sc. Professor of Horticulture and Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture

J. S. L. Waldie, B.Sc. Lecturer in Agricultural Botany and Warden of Wantage Hall.

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James Brough, D.Sc., F.R.S.E., Professor of Zoology & Comparative Anatomy, University College of South Wales & Monmouthshire, Cardiff
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*University College of the South West of England, Exeter.*
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J. Wilkinson, Ph.D., F.L.S., Lecturer in Botany

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†V. O. Rees, F.R.I.B.A. Chartered Architect.

*For the Second Session.*

W. D. Furneaux, M.Sc., Psychologist in Charge Nuffield Research Unit, Institute of Psychiatry University of London

*For the Third Session*

H. M. D. Parker, C.B.E., M.A. Under Secretary Ministry of Labour and National Service.

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*Assistant Secretary*—A. L. Fleet M.A.

*Assistant Editor*
*Report of Conference Proceedings*—T. Craig, M.A.

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† Member of Commission on the Planning of University Halls of Residence appointed by the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals in 1948.

## FIRST SESSION

### Friday Afternoon December 12th

## HALLS OF RESIDENCE AND STUDENT AMENITIES

*Chairman* C. R. Morris, M.A., LL.D., Vice-Chancellor University of Leeds, and Chairman, Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals.

*Summary circulated prior to the conference of address by Dr Eric Ashby*

1. It is not the purpose of this paper to question the belief that a residential university offers its students better opportunities for work and for recreation than a non-residential university. Some universities are entirely residential; others are well on the way to becoming so; others press forward in the hope that one day they may become residential. It is only to universities in this third category that the arguments in this paper are addressed. The purpose of the paper is to discuss whether, for this third category of universities, there are alternative arrangements which would confer on students many of the advantages of residence at a capital outlay less than that needed for hostels.

2. It cannot be said that to live in lodgings deprives a student of the advantages of university life, for in any one year some 44 per cent. of the students at Oxford and Cambridge live in lodgings. The student who needs residential accommodation (or some alternative to it) is the student who lives at home, and whose loyalties to his family often conflict with his loyalties to the university. The paper will therefore emphasise the needs of the home student.

3. There are nine British universities where over 40 per cent of the students live at home. The number of home students in these nine universities in 1950–51 was 24,289. The approximate cost of accommodating them in hostels even for one year of their courses would be not less than £14 millions, and for their whole courses would be of the order of £40–£50 millions and there would of course be a correspondingly large increase in allowances made by the Ministry of Education and L.E.A.s to those in receipt of maintenance grants. Even if the universities were so impressed with the need for residence that they threw tradition to the winds and built aluminium-bungalow hostel accommodation, the capital cost of housing all home students in these nine universities *for one year only* would be £6–£8 millions.

4 If it is assumed that capital sums of these dimensions will not be available to accommodate students who live at home within reasonable distance of the university then the nine universities with an average of 50 per cent. of their students living at home have to contemplate alternative ways of providing the amenities which accompany residence

5. That there are alternatives is evident from the healthy and full student life to be found in continental universities. Indeed many continental universities, as ancient and as distinguished as any British university would reject our residential system as smacking of paternalism.

6 The alternatives centre round the students union. The point will be made that the traditional large union to be found in some civic universities could not in its present form become a suitable substitute for residence. The solution may lie in the modification of unions, by decentralisation by providing evening meals and facilities for private entertaining in brief by making available to the student all the benefits of residential life except bed and breakfast. The paper will end with some discussion of the consequences of this proposal to universities L E A.s and students themselves.

*TABLE*

(From the U G C. returns from Universities and University Colleges 1950–51 )

(a) Numbers of students in lodgings at Oxford in 1950–51 3,303 (45.8 % of total) at Cambridge 3 384 (42 9% of total)

(b) Numbers of students living at home in nine British civic universities.

| *University* | *No. full-time students* | *No. living at home* |
|---|---|---|
| Birmingham | 3,306 | 1,372 |
| Newcastle | 3,185 | 1,730 |
| Leeds | 3,245 | 1,343 |
| Liverpool | 3,297 | 1,663 |
| London | 13,4 | 8 291 |
| Manchester | 4,318 | 2,008 |
| Aberdeen | 1 956 | 920 |
| Edinburgh | 5,327 | 2,483 |
| Glasgow | 5,586 | 4,270 |
| Total | 48 630 | 24,289 |

The CHAIRMAN This is the seventh of the post-war series of conferences, and it is also I think, the biggest of the conferences yet held. Universities were invited, where they thought it suitable to increase their representation bearing in mind the subjects which were going to be discussed. They have clearly taken advantage of that arrangement, and the conference is a little larger than usual.

The conference is arranged, or has been of recent years to give each year an opportunity for a free and homely discussion of such things as, to judge from what has happened in the course of the year it seems that we should like to discuss. Among the advantages which have been found is that if anything very interesting is being started in any one university we are apt to hear of it at this conference while on such questions as, *for instance the attitude of the universities to* national service and whether undergraduates should do their national service before or after their period at the university this conference has provided an easy way of discovering which way university opinion is moving We found a change in it in that respect which surprised many of us at the conference two years ago. Altogether it gives us a very good idea of whether a particular university opinion is establishing itself on a given topic, or whether opinion has not yet settled down.

We particularly value the rather homely and free way in which we can discuss things here. We have resisted the temptation which is increasing each year to allow the confer ence to become bigger We have kept it to a small relatively confidential size, and we have all learned to value that

We are, as always immensely grateful to the University of London for allowing us to meet in this hall, and we shall express our thanks to them at the end of this conference.

We can congratulate one another on having a good representation from the universities and from the Association of University Teachers. We are delighted to see that the Chairman and Secretary of the Grants Committee have again found time in spite of their great preoccupations, to be with us for the conference. We have also a considerable number of distinguished visitors and guests from kindred institutions, from overseas and indeed from a very wide background.

I shall not venture to say anything to introduce the subject of discussion this afternoon but I should like to mention for what it is worth, that it is noticeable that at this conference for the first time, all three subjects are very closely related to the undergraduate. As it is pressure of general interest all round the universities which pushes subjects to the fore and leads to their choice it is interesting to find at this conference that all three of our subjects have the student as their centre of interest.

We are usually fortunate in our speakers at this conference, and on this occasion we are particularly happy in having Dr Ashby and Dr Humphreys to open the subject for us. Dr Ashby has already offered some contributions on this topic in print.

ERIC ASHBY D.Sc. Sc.D. D.I.C. F.L.S. President and Vice-Chancellor The Queen's University of Belfast. The Home Universities Conference is a conference not a series of lectures. Therefore all that is expected of me is to start a discussion. The summary which has already been circulated to you (*see* pp. 11 and 12) contains the bones of my argument. What I shall do now is to clothe them in a few more facts and opinions.

Let me begin by saying I hope the discussion will centre round the specific problem of this paper and not break loose into unprofitable generalities. About the relative merits of a residential and a non-residential university I have nothing new to say. I am convinced and I assume everyone else is that a residential university is better. Therefore this afternoon's programme should have no relevance for a residential university and not much relevance for a university well on the way to becoming residential. Also though it is relevant to this discussion I omit any consideration of the problem of student lodgings. Nearly half the students at Oxford and Cambridge in any one year are living in lodgings, and although this may be deplored no one seriously contends that it weakens the corporate life of these two universities. I hope therefore that this discussion will concentrate on the problem of the student who lives at home. I have elsewhere argued the case that the student who lives at home is worse off than the student who lives in lodgings. The chief argument is psychological. Most day students come from very modest homes. Indeed there is good reason to assume that one might expect over 70 per cent of the students to come from homes where the income is less than £800 p.a. I hardly need to remind you what this means in many homes: only one fire in winter, the younger brother or sister doing homework at the same table, a fixed meal time which cannot be varied without giving mother more work, and above all an inevitable clash of loyalty between the university which is all the time emphasising—and rightly so—that being a student is a whole time job and home where family duties face students, particularly women students, as soon as they are in the house. Some parents are helpful and encourage the student to use home for bed and breakfast during these precious years. Other parents don't (and could hardly be expected to) see this

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*Universities Quarterly* Vol 5 No 2 February 1951 *A Note on an Alternative to Halls of Residence* (Turnstile Press Ltd., London)

point of view and they continue to demand obligations which are not consistent with student life. The student in lodgings may be poorly fed and uncomfortable but at least he has no obligations of loyalty to his landlady!

There are nine British universities (I purposely omit reference to the university in which I am working) where over forty per cent. (and on an average fifty per cent.) of the students live at home. For one of these the percentage is as high as 76. You have the figures before you. In these nine universities some 24,000 students go home each night nearly all of them to duties and distractions and loyalties which conflict with those of the university. It would cost some £14 millions to provide hostel accommodation enough for all of them to live in *for one year only* of their course and some £40–50 millions to provide hostel accommodation enough for all of them to live in all the time. Let us put these figures in perspective. According to the report of the Select Committee on Estimates the amount spent by all the British universities on student residence in the seven years 1945–52 is £2.1 millions. There was doubtless other new building (e.g. at colleges at Oxford and Cambridge) toward which no U.G.C. grants were made but £2.1 millions represents the main cost of new buildings for student residence. It is impossible to say how many more residential places have been provided by this expenditure, because some of it has been on kitchens, some to adapt existing buildings and some for new buildings. But even an optimist would not suggest that more than 1,400 students a year are benefiting from this expenditure and from the information some vice-chancellors have been kind enough to give me, I think the figure is lower than this. Furthermore of this £2.1 millions, only £386,000 seems to have been spent in any of the nine universities where some 50 per cent. of the students live at home. In other words, of the 48,000 students in the nine universities who are the subject of this afternoon's paper, probably not more than 250 have benefited from this expenditure, though there has been some further increase in accommodation by minor expenditure such as the conversion of private houses into hostels. But by and large the problem of finding residence for the 24,000 home students in these nine universities has scarcely been affected.

The question I want to raise for discussion is this: what should our policy be for home students in these nine large cities? Let us examine several possibilities.

(*a*) To continue the present policy of building enough hostels to accommodate all students for at least one year.

This would cost some £14 millions. Now the total expenditure from 1945–52 by all universities on all major building projects is of the order of £10 millions and universities are

nowhere near the end of their needs for new buildings for teaching and research So if this policy is adopted there is no justification for hoping that it will benefit many students for (say) the next fifty years.

(b) To recognise that residential accommodation is so important that we throw to the winds the tradition of building attractive but expensive hostels and instead put up utility buildings. There is, after all, something in this view It is only by tradition that we have come to associate universities with elegant building At matriculation and degree ceremonies we never tire of telling students that the university is a society of people and, like a regiment (which by tradition is housed in hideous buildings) its prestige is not dependent on the elegance of its premises. This is a modification of policy (a) If we adopted this policy we would no longer assume that each student place costs some £1 800 We would recalculate the cost of hostels assuming they are put up like army barracks. A firm which makes one-storey aluminium buildings has been good enough to calculate for me the approximate cost per place of a hostel for 150 students built in one storey out of aluminium. It works out at £800–£900 per student place and the manufacturers claim that it can be erected in 35 per cent. of the time taken to put up the traditional type of building This would provide all the amenities of a hall of residence on a bungalow system But even this would cost some £20 million for the 24,000 home students, twice as much as was spent on all building in all universities from the end of the war to February 1952 or £6 million to £8 million to accommodate students for at least one year And it would by no means solve the whole problem, because beside the 24,000 students in these nine universities who live at home there are some 7 000 students who live at home and attend other universities, beside some 33 000 students in lodgings.

There would be other important consequences of either of these two policies if they were pursued. The cost to local education authorities would be considerably increased. Doubtless some authorities would meet this increased cost. Others might do so only by restricting their activities in other ways either by applying a stiffer means test or by making fewer awards The consequence might be that for some students financial barriers to a university education, which have been largely removed by recent legislation would reappear

(c) A third possibility though I don t myself think it is worth serious consideration, would be to make all students live in lodgings. I mention it now only to reject it without further argument. Unless accompanied by other proposals

to which I shall refer in a moment thus would not solve our problem at all.

(*d*) This leaves *for discussion a fourth alternative which has* already received some publicity among British universities a policy (I repeat) suitable only for a university which has at least half its students living at home and which is making comparatively little progress in providing residence for them. It is a policy which (briefly) allows parents or landladies to provide bed and breakfast, but ensures that the rest of the student's day can be spent in or about the university Let me run over some arguments for and against this alternative.

I begin with some arguments in its favour and I start with an argument of principle. You recall that residence was enforced in medieval universities as a disciplinary measure, and not to provide what enthusiasts vaguely describe as the indefinable advantages of corporate life It was enforced at a time when boys might go up to a university at the age of fourteen You know also that although this ancient tradition of enforcing residence in halls persists in Oxford and Cambridge and in some modern British universities which model themselves on Oxford and Cambridge, nevertheless it has been abandoned by almost all the other ancient universities of Europe It is hard for us, who do not question that halls of residence are the ideal for a university to realise that it is an ideal rejected by many continental universities, not because it is out of reach, but because it is considered undesirable. A Swedish *graduate* recently described it as "the system prevalent in Anglo-Saxon countries of herding students together under relatively strict supervision in colleges" Anyone who is familiar with continental universities knows that universities like Uppsala, Montpellier Göttingen and Utrecht have a corporate life as healthy as that in our oldest universities, and scholastic attainments as distinguished. Yet they are not residential. So we can conclude that the desirable coherence the sense of belonging to a society which our more fortunate universities acquire through the residential system is acquired in other places by other means.

The other means are simply to provide facilities for students to eat together and to relax and work and talk together even though they do not sleep under the same roof in brief to provide in university unions everything which a hostel provides, except the accommodation and plumbing and labour involved in providing bed and breakfast. Let me now give two other arguments in favour of this policy

My second argument is financial. Such a policy as this is practicable financially As I have mentioned elsewhere a good deal of the capital and *maintenance costs of a hall of* residence is devoted to washing students and keeping them

asleep. These are the least important features of corporate life. Architects have been good enough to work out for me that the capital needed to build a hostel for 150 students could if spent on a union provide all the day time amenities of a hostel for 900–1 000 students It could therefore benefit at least six times as many students to put it another way most of what we want might be accomplished in one-sixth of the time

My third argument is one that may not weigh heavily with some of you but it does weigh heavily with me. It seems to me that many of th[illegible] long-range policies of universities will provide opportunities for our great grandchildren at the expense of our children Suppose we resign ourselves to the fact that it may t[illegible]ke fifty years to make these nine British universities re[illegible]id[illegible]ntial, and we decide to make no elaborate interim arran[illegible]m[illegible]nts then indeed the children to be born in the ninet[illegible]ghties will doubtless be grateful to us. Meanwhi[illegible] generations of 24 000 home students in these un[illegible]ti[illegible]s [illegible]ver a quarter of a million students, may have to [illegible] shortcomings of a 9 a.m.–5 p.m. university I cann[illegible] feeling that the university administrator (how ever m[illegible] dislike compromise) has to strike a compromi[illegible] fulfilling our obligations to the present and [illegible] the future

[illegible] the arguments in favour of putting our money int[illegible] rather than halls of residence. There are of course [illegible] arguments against this policy One is that if one [illegible]ts from the principle that all universities mu[illegible]t[illegible] be residential then we shall never recover the prin[illegible]nd in fact the big city universities will never even tr[illegible] be[illegible] residential. Many of you may believe that to [illegible]han[illegible]th[illegible] policy now would do great and permanent harm t[illegible] university life Another is that for better or worse we ha[illegible] built our new universities in big ugly cities. Theref[illegible]re we [illegible]annot hope without residence to acquire the corporat[illegible] life which is accomplished without residence in a small town like Uppsala in other words the great continental universities in small towns are not good models for our civic universities in large cities

There ar[illegible] doubtless other arguments against the policy of abandoning the idea of residence in these nine universities but I shall spend a few moments now outlining the kind of facilities which a union should provide if it is to replace residence

The first principle must be that to belong to a university is a whole time job The union must therefore help the student to spend all his waking hours at the university Many unions already offer the student all sorts of club facilities in

the evening But we need much more than this. If the student wants to work he must be able to find a quiet place in the university library or in the laboratory or in study rooms in the union (in the new women s union of one university there are several small study rooms which hold four or five students each, and they are full every night) If he wants to entertain a few friends he should be able to hire a room cheaply and have his party there, instead of having to take them home and put a strain on the family ration book. If he wants to spend the evening listening to gramophone records he should be able to get a small room where he can play what he likes. All this means a much larger number of small rooms than most unions have in addition to the commoner facilities for billiards, films and television and so on.

The most important provision should be for evening meals with a snack bar which provides coffee and cocoa up to 10.30 And this brings me to one proposal which would need a good deal of negotiation. There would be considerable resistance to the idea that a student should stay at the university till 10 30 every night both from parents and from students. One way to wear this resistance down would be to include in the fees the cost of a standard evening meal (say for four days a week) which the student would have to attend We would have to persuade L E.A.s that this is a proper charge for them to meet.

Lastly there is one aspect of this proposed policy on which a great deal of thinking has still to be done. In a large university would not a single union or two unions (one for men and one for women) be too big a unit ever to have a corporate lif ? I am inclined to think it would. The University of Glasgow for instance would have to provide for nearly four thousand men students who live at home or in lodgings. Would it not be better to have several small unions, each with its own catering facilities and common rooms, and to persuade students to reorganise internal athletic events on an inter-union, instead of an inter faculty basis ? This would, of course be more expensive than having one enormous union but it would cost only a fraction of the cost of halls of residence. To take a specific example in one university two large houses have recently been converted, at a cost of about £20 000 including the cost of purchase to a women s union which could comfortably accommodate some 300 women at once i.e. at a cost of some £67 " per seat " Would it be better to make another six unions like this from other private houses each to become the centre for 300 men students or would it be better to build a new union for 1,800 men students ?

I would like to end with a specific suggestion. We are

facing a pressing and important problem. I hope that this discussion will lead to one of two conclusions either that the suggested policy for those nine civic universities which are still far from being residential is worth a trial, or that it isn t. If it is worth a trial, then I have a suggestion to make. There is still a lot of thinking about the policy to be done by experts. Four years ago a commission (many of whose members are here this afternoon) did an immense service to British universities by publishing a report on the planning of halls of residence.* An immense amount of experience and thought went into this report. I think we should be wise to assume that just as much thought and experience need to be concentrated on the planning of unions, if they are to provide a genuine alternative to residence. I have said nothing to-day about the student organisation of unions, or the need for a warden rather than the usual steward in the sort of unions I contemplate. If after this discussion it does seem to you worth while to provide for day students the essential benefits of halls of residence, one would like to see a similar commission (or better still the same commission, for they have already analysed the needs of students in residence) asked to prepare a report on unions suitable for the nine large civic universities most of whose students live at home. We want to know more about the design of unions for this new purpose the economics of evening meals the sort of warden needed, the consequences to L.E.A.s and to parents and the adjustments in athletics and other activities which students themselves might be asked to make.

H F HUMPHREYS O B E M.C. T D D.L. M.B Ch.B. M.D S LL D F D.S. F.S.A. Vice-Chancellor and Principal, University of Birmingham I propose to accept the limitations suggested by Dr Ashby and to take for granted the advantages offered by a residential university But I hope that I shall not be thought guilty of giving you glimpses of the obvious if I try for the sake of crystallising discussion to mention what those advantages are—or perhaps I should say what they appear to me to be—and to consider how many of those advantages are missed by a non residential university and how many of them can be acquired by adopting some of the suggestions which Dr Ashby has put forward.

The first and most obvious advantage, of course, is that students in a residential university have a room of their own in which they can do their private studies or talk with a friend. That advantage I suggest, is certainly obtained by students

* *The Planning of University Halls of Residence Report of Commission appointed by Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Great Britain and Ireland* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1948.)

who live in good lodgings. Dr Ashby has stated that nearly half the students at Oxford and Cambridge are in fact living in lodgings. It is obtained by students who have a sitting room or bed-sitting room in a home of their own and while I was listening to Dr Ashby I wondered whether perhaps the home conditions in the South may not be quite so grim as those which he pictured in the North at any rate, not so many complaints have reached me. That is the first advantage of living in a hall of residence.

The other three advantages I will briefly summarise. I would put second—though it is really the most important—that cross-fertilisation of ideas which occurs when students in different faculties and undergoing different disciplines meet together for their meals in the junior common room and so on, and realise that the particular discipline in which they are being trained is not the only one which is valid. That has immense value

The next is the staff student contact the contact of immature with mature minds of young men and women in search of values with those who have found them.

Finally there is the training which is given in community life. In an overcrowded world we are all obliged to live in communities and unless we get some training in community living during our time at the university we shall be handicapped throughout life and so will the state of which we form a part.

Those last three advantages—the effect of the students on one another staff-student contacts and community living—constitute university *education* as opposed to the *instruction* which students get in their lectures and laboratories.

We are faced with the difficulty which Dr Ashby mentioned that they are not acquired at any rate in full value, if the community is a very large one. If you have a mob of 3 000 students milling round without any segregation into smaller groups the value of those factors is very largely lost That is why students at a residential university organised in colleges get those values so much more than students at a non-residential university who have to go away as soon as the last lecture of the day is over and undertake perhaps an hour s journey to their home or lodgings.

So far as lodgings are concerned, I must disagree to some extent with Dr Ashby I do not think that it is possible to compare students at Oxford and Cambridge who are living in lodgings with students living in the same way in a civic university because in fact the students at Oxford and Cambridge who live in lodgings are just as much part of the college as those living inside it They may have another hundred yards to go to hall but they dine in hall and use the junior common room. There is the further advantage that

Oxford and Cambridge are small places compared with Glasgow Birmingham and London so that their universities have a proportionally greater local importance and their lodgings are never far from college.

The tendency of students to segregate themselves into smaller groups in a civic university is powerful because they feel instinctively that unless they do so they will not obtain in full measure the four advantages which I have described We all know how they do it They have their athletic clubs and other clubs theatre groups, debating societies and so on corresponding to the O U D S and the union at Oxford. They have also something which is distinctive of the civic university the technical societies. Every branch of study—medical, dental mining metallurgy engineering—has its student society and these societies provide the undergraduate with his feeling of community They have however one great disadvantage that their subjects for discussion are largely technical. To get the best out of their university education students should consort with others who are under a different discipline

We have tried recently in Birmingham to mitigate that disadvantage in two ways We have suggested to these student societies that in their programme of meetings, which usually take the form of a lecture followed by a discussion at least once a term they should have a discussion on some non-technical subject. We provide them with a panel of people who are willing to come to talk to them on some such theme. It is of great value for them to take part in or to listen to a discussion of something unconnected with their own discipline We have also recently tried to persuade them —it is all voluntary—that at the end of these meetings—which normally take place when the last lecture of the day is over starting at 5 p.m. and going on for about two hours—instead of going to their lodgings or homes they should go to the union and have supper there and during supper talk with other groups of students and perhaps with the staff who generally support these technical meetings and who would go with them In that way they have a free and informal conversation, which has improved the value of these meetings of the technical societies.

So far I have spoken of the disadvantages of the large union as compared with the small college but let us admit that it has certain advantages Here I should like to speak of our experience in Birmingham At Birmingham the University Grants Committee financed the building of a new wing for the union, which was opened last year and we have now I think the largest union in the country We are able to accommodate 1 500 people for any one meal. That union is managed

entirely by the students themselves. It is quite a large undertaking, with a turnover of £100 000 a year—£50 000 on catering, £20 000 on the ordinary running of the union and £30 000 on various other things. There are of course, certain checks. On the finance committee there are one or two members of the staff, one of whom has to sign cheques, and on the buildings committee there are also members of the staff but by and large the whole of this very large business is run by the students themselves. That is a very valuable training in responsibility and in management, and I venture to think that it is perhaps one of the reasons why differences of opinion with the police are less numerous in Birmingham, I am given to understand, than in most other university towns in this country The students do acquire a deep sense of responsibility in this way and escape the paternalism which is often cited as a criticism of the residential college

I have nothing very much to add to Dr Ashby's practical suggestions for obtaining at less cost much of the value which is obtained in such full measure in a residential university except to tell you something of our experiments in Birmingham It is difficult to believe that the sort of life which is lived in an Oxford or Cambridge college could be extended to a modern university or if it were that it would be a success. The incomes of Oxford and Cambridge colleges range from about £50,000 a year to £150 000 and in some cases a little more I do not suggest that that income is spent solely on maintaining the college as a hall of residence The colleges support fellows and do a good deal of the teaching work of the university Nevertheless it is a very substantial income and it is unlikely that the civic universities could ever afford to copy the Oxford or Cambridge college which is much more than a hall of residence It is a complete community for social and teaching purposes, and I know of nothing else in the country which is quite the same.

We must think of something less expensive than that. Dr Ashby published his inspiring article early last year in the *Universities Quarterly* he may be surprised to learn that, as often happens to people with names prominent in the public mind, his surname has now become an adjective. In Birmingham I preside over an Ashby Committee we have an Ashby plan, and even Ashby lodgings. The first experiment which we started was that of evening meals. We have the facilities for providing them and we started them this year To encourage the student to go we have also kept the libraries open in the evening There is no great demand for library facilities after 8 or 9 p.m. but there is a great demand between 5 p.m and 7 p.m. and then the students go for a meal to the union. The number of those taking an evening meal there

is between 300 and 400 and it is going up I have no accurate knowledge of how many of these are students living in lodgings or living at home, but I have the impression from such inquiries as I have made that it is about half and half Perhaps the homes are rather better in Birmingham than in the North. I keep a close watch on this experiment and I notice that after the meal is over at 8 p.m. or 9 p.m. there is no great demand for library facilities the students go back to their homes or lodgings and work there I have thought of Dr Ashby's solution of providing small rooms for study and we have discussed it

The next idea which we had, inspired by Dr Ashby was that of Ashby lodgings. The Ashby lodging in our definition, is where the landlady takes students only for bed and breakfast and the week-end, and for the rest of the time they have their meals in the union That is a very recent experiment. I wrote a letter to the *Birmingham Post* last summer advertising the fact to landladies and I persuaded the editor of the *Birmingham Post* to publish a leading article the same day We had many inquiries from landladies, and it is clear that this will be very popular with them. The response from the students was not so great because many of the students who were used to living and feeding in digs wanted to go on doing so but there was a very gratifying response from freshmen For this first term we have 200 people in Ashby lodgings and about 60 per cent of them are freshmen. Freshmen like the idea and I have some confidence that the numbers will accordingly increase.

There is another alternative which we have not yet adopted but which is a possibility to be borne in mind. It means building Dr Ashby told us that his aluminium hall of residence was going to cost about £900 per student The University of Birmingham sponsors the University College of North Staffordshire at Stoke on Trent. It is now erecting a hall without any feeding facilities because there is ample dining accommodation in the existing refectory Anyone who has had to run a hall of residence knows that the uneconomic part of it is the catering, which costs a great deal of money and may involve a considerable loss, for it is difficult to cater economically for 150–200 people. Stoke on Trent, therefore is building a hall without catering facilities, though it provides the students with their private rooms common rooms and so on That is being done at a cost of less than £600 per student housed two-thirds of the cost of the aluminium bungalow and only one-third of the cost of a normal hall of residence. In those towns where the number of lodgings is limited, or where it is necessary to travel a

considerable distance to reach them, that is an idea which might well be borne in mind.

The question arises whether under such conditions there will be as full a community life as is obtained in an Oxford or Cambridge college. Possibly not, but if there are common rooms and students from different faculties mix they will go some way towards it. I do not think that the most valuable portion of community living in Oxford and Cambridge is dining in hall.

I apologise for having said so much about our own experiments in Birmingham. But I had nothing to add to the general propositions which Dr Ashby put forward, and I thought that it might interest you to know what had been our experience in starting the experiments which were suggested by his article.

The CHAIRMAN I now invite discussion. I ought to have said in my opening remarks that we are delighted to have with us so many members of the commission which prepared for us the report on halls of residence * a piece of work for which we are all extremely grateful.

Mr C. H. STEWART (*Edinburgh*) It is perhaps appropriate at this early stage in the discussion to report to the conference that the University of Edinburgh had been thinking about this problem even before Dr Ashby's article appeared. It has adopted a policy (though it has not yet taken it very far) which is similar to that suggested by Dr Ashby. We have publicly stated, and have in fact informed the University Grants Committee that it is the university's policy while recognising the valuable contribution made by halls of residence to the academic community and while actually planning to increase the number of places in its halls of residence, to provide within a relatively limited area in the centre of the city all the facilities required by students within the waking hours of the day.

We have not as I say taken that policy very far in practice, partly on account of lack of funds and of the necessary building licences. Within the last quinquennium, however we have opened one additional common room in the Old College for both men and women students. We could not at present have one large union, even if we wanted to do so because we could not afford to build it. We already have separate men's and women's unions and the men's union is already much too small. We have therefore been forced to consider the provision of these facilities by means of common room

* *See footnote to p. 10.*

(so far mixed common rooms) Probably the next two or three to be provided will be mixed common rooms catering for 200 to 300 students each The Court has now instituted a committee (which, following an earlier suggestion we may now find it convenient to call the Ashby Committee) which is examining the whole question of the provision of unions and common rooms throughout the university available to all students.

It is relevant also to mention that we are pressing on with our plans to provide a staff house on quite a large scale. It seems to us in Edinburgh that it is important not merely to give the students somewhere to sit and somewhere to eat in their non-working hours, but also to make it possible for our staff to spend some time apart from their working hours, on university premises and to be available to see and to mix with the students, and to take some part in their activities.

MR J W L. ADAMS (*Sheffield*) As a mere warden in this distinguished gathering, I was somewhat relieved to find that Dr Ashby was not proposing to purge the halls altogether despite his experiences behind the Iron Curtain! It seems to me however that he has made too big a distinction between the problem of the student living at home and the problem of the student living in lodgings. Students living in lodgings have a greater degree of mobility but their problems are very much the same and I think that Dr Humphreys by his contribution has restored the balance and has shown that fundamentally the Ashby solution is applicable also to students living in lodgings.

What I am not happy about in Dr Ashby's proposal is the linking of it to the student union It seems to me that there is a need for a student union which is, as it were, an all university club just as there is a need for a staff house as a staff club but I believe that the pattern of this new development ought rather to move along the lines of what may be called the non-residential hall I think that the important point about halls is that they provide what may perhaps be called the parochial organisation of the university or they should do so As Dr Humphreys says, the reason why the older universities can get along with half their students living in lodgings is that they already have the corporate organisation into which those men fit

If you base this scheme on the union you are to some extent leaving the university staff out—unavoidably because the union is traditionally the students club run by the students. While many of us are no doubt honorary members of our students unions, we are there very much *ex gratia*

In his article in the *Universities Quarterly* Dr Ashby

emphasised that this business of establishing bridges between the staff and the students in the civic universities is of first-class importance. I think it may be possible to do that by adopting more of what I would call the non-residential hall pattern. I do not want to go into details of accommodation and organisation, but we want more of the pattern which brings in a senior common room in the unit rather than linking it up with the union organisation. That seems to me to be important, because we require in our parochial organisation something which is intimate—and therefore not too large something which brings the staff in and something which brings together into an organised community students from all over the university from all departments and aspects of the university's life.

We need not be worried by the counter argument that the proposals for a more residential university will be adversely affected. Dr Ashby made it clear in his article and has made it clear to-day that for certain purposes the residential hall is still important and should still have public support I do not think however that even the most optimistic of us ever originally thought in terms of taking all students out of homes into residence. That would be much too big an undertaking It seems to me, however that we can maintain the essence of the Ashby plan—which I very much welcome, and I hope that it will be further looked into—if we have the residential hall for students coming from a distance, or for as many of them as possible and at the same time have this other organisation which will provide a parochial unit for those whom we cannot for the present accommodate in hall. I see no real difficulty in having, as it were, two prongs to our programme. As time goes on, if it seems financially possible to go over more to the idea of residence, these non-residential halls could provide the nucleus for residential halls in the future.

Mr W S. Angus (*Aberdeen*) I think that we from north of the Border should apologise for the fact that two Secretaries of Scottish universities are presuming to address the conference on what is perhaps a peculiarly English topic. I say that partly to point a moral which I believe to be very important in this connection, namely that each university should think out its own problems it is dangerous to generalise or to consider transplanting an institution lock stock and barrel from Oxford Cambridge or wherever it may be, to a different set of circumstances. One important factor is whether the university is situated in a large town—what is frequently called a civic university—or in a small town. It is perhaps true that it is more important to go away from home than it is to live in a hall of residence.

I should like to amplify what was said by Mr Adams, that we must not lose sight of the flexibility of the Ashby plan. Here I am thinking of what I have seen happening in St. Cuthbert's Society the non-collegiate organisation at Durham. It provides for a number of students living in lodgings with dons to advise them and to exercise tutorial supervision. The stage has been reached of giving that non-collegiate society a headquarters house to which students can be expected to come for a certain number of meals in the week, and a certain number of students can even be provided with sleeping accommodation

It is perfectly possible for such an organisation to develop by gradual stages over a period of years into one where a higher and higher proportion of the students live in. It is equally possible for it to be an organisation where most people live out, and in a university a high proportion of whose students live at home because it is a fairly big town, such an organisation will have as members a cross-section of those from a distance and those whose homes are in the town. By that means probably better than by any other we can hope to induce the man who lives at home first of all to become a member of a society where he can have facilities to work and dine in the evenings and to associate with others and then to live in the buildings belonging to that society

Professor J L Montrose (*Association of University Teachers*) One of the principal reasons for which I welcome the Ashby initiative is that it has put an end to a large extent to what I would call the bogey of the residential university. Very often the residential university idea has been put forward as a hindrance and an obstacle to real progress. Somebody puts forward a scheme which we consider beneficial to the students and then the objection is raised "Yes, if you had a residential university that would be all very well and all that you want could be accomplished, but the only way to do it is to have a residential university Then, as you have not the money to make the university residential, you do not get the advantages of the residential university or of any other scheme which has been put forward.

I venture to disagree with what has been said on the question of whether it is worth while looking at the theory of the residential university in this discussion. I am glad that Dr Humphreys has spoken about this because he has considered the advantages and the disadvantages of a residential university and it is important to do so It follows from the first point which I made. I do not think that the notion of a residential university is an end in itself I look upon residence at a university on the Oxford and Cambridge

plan as a symbol of dedication to some high purpose Residence is a means to an end let us consider what the end is.

Dr Humphreys has referred to some of the educational aims which might be achieved through residence. I would mention two others because I believe that these can be attained equally by the Ashby plan It seems to me that what the residential university does really exemplify is the notion that the student is dedicated to work of real importance that university work calls for the full stretch of a student's intellectual and physical powers—that he is going to be fully employed. I think that this idea that the student is engaged on something which represents full-time study can be carried out just as well by the Ashby plan as by a residential university

The other point is that the dignity and beauty of Oxford and Cambridge impress themselves on the student by making him aware of the real importance to himself and to the community of university work. It should be possible for us to get that idea over outside the residential universities. If we have these ideals we should seek to obtain them by such means as are available and the Ashby plan seems to me to be the best means available to universities with very limited financial resources—that is to say all universities in the United Kingdom.

Mr J C. Beckett (*Queen's Belfast*) There are two points that I want to make. The first refers to something which Dr Ashby said at the beginning of his speech and which no one has taken up since but which seems to me to be a fundamental point. He concentrated quite properly on the student living at home, and said, again quite properly that there is always the possibility—and I think usually the reality—of some sort of tension between loyalty to the home and loyalty to other communities to which the student may also belong I think that that tension very often does exist but I do not think that it is a bad thing that it should exist. We live in a world of tensions, and where there is no tension there is no life. A man has to work out his own salvation between different loyalties. You do not do away with the tension by removing it geographically by taking the man away from home at 8.30 in the morning and keeping him away until 11 at night. You do not do away with the tension you may disguise it and perhaps prevent his recognising it but it is still there. The difficulty which arises from the existence of this tension is something which is not solved by the Ashby plan. I am not sure that it ought necessarily to be solved in any slick way

That brings me to the second point about which I am uneasy I am uneasy about what I feel to be a sort of

onslaught on the individual initiative of the student. The university at which I was a student myself has a long tradition of people living in lodgings. In that sense it is rather like the Scottish universities on which to some extent it was modelled. It also has a long tradition of people living at home. It did succeed however in producing a very active corporate life particularly before it became so large as it is now. It seems to me that size is one of the greatest problems with which we have to deal.

I feel that a student ought to be left to do something for himself and that students as a body ought to be left to do something for themselves and that the more we organise and lay on things for them the more we try to guide them into channels and run them along corridors the more danger there is. I feel that that is not the ideal of a university and that we should leave something for the students to do on their own.

I have deliberately emphasised these two points because I am sure that there is something to be said against what seems to be the popular side. It is not so much as I have been saying but, since nobody else seemed willing to say it I thought that I had better bring it out as clearly as possible.

Mr J H Nicholson (*Hull*): I think that Dr Ashby's idea is excellent if it is recognised as second best, a second best for those who cannot do the best for lack of money and for other reasons and an interim measure for those who some day can do the best but cannot do it yet. There is a distinction here between the large university institution and the small one. The large college can never do what I regard as best, namely provide halls for the great majority of those who do not live at home but the small institution can do so and it would be a pity if the Ashby model became the accepted type of provision.

There is room for a great deal more experiment. I do not believe that even in halls the form of life and organisation which will finally be considered to be appropriate has yet been attained. It is somewhere between what used to be called a hostel and a college. Hostel is a word which I hope that we shall not use again, and I was sorry to hear Dr Ashby use it. On the other hand, I think that to attempt to build halls like colleges but without the college organisation is not only impracticable but recalls the old proverb that the best is the enemy of the good. I believe that there is a practicable plan which even in these days will not be unduly expensive compared with other types of building. We have such a plan and have had it for some time. I hope that it may soon be realised.

We are already doing in a small place a good many of the things about which Dr Ashby has spoken. We keep the library open to 9 p.m. we provide an evening meal, we have alcoves in the library for study and a hut where the students can read. This is not based on any theory we have tried one thing and another and this is what has resulted. I am glad to note that the great University of Birmingham has a coherent scheme on these lines and I should like to see it.

When students come into a hall which has a warden you accept a certain responsibility for their conduct and manner. That is one of the reasons why you receive them there. On the other hand, you do not want to cramp their development and you have somehow to strike the happy mean between too much discipline in the old sense and the idea that they should have as much freedom as if they were not living in a hall. The great difference between a hall and a college does not lie only in the character of the buildings and the endowment. A hall does not normally have dons, and the function if any of the members of the staff who live there towards the students has not been satisfactorily solved. There is room for a great deal more experiment. I hope that where the residential ideal is practicable it will not be impeded by the fact that a cheaper and less satisfactory alternative is now available and has met with distinguished blessing.

Professor S. D. LASH (*Queen's Ontario*) I did not intend to take part in this discussion but I have been encouraged to do so by your kind invitation by the fact that this seems to be an afternoon for Queen's University and, though I belong to another one I feel that we should hold our end up and because we have carried out at our university a small experiment which may be of interest to this conference.

Some years ago a group of our students felt that they were missing some of the aspects of university life which have been discussed this afternoon and they formed a co-operative, secured a house converted it and established it as a residence. That experiment started, I think, seven years ago and it has been succeeded by others. We now have three such co-operatives, two for men and one for women. In each case they have managed to persuade somebody to give the house—an old house no longer needed by its owners. They operate these places themselves and do almost all the work. In this way they obtain cheaper living and in many ways more satisfactory living than the students in lodgings can get. The experiment has been successful. They are careful to mix students from different faculties and years and to avoid any suggestion of exclusiveness.

Dr G R. Tudhope (*St Andrews*) I have the privilege to be the warden of one of the men's residences of St Andrews University but my experience is not in the ancient town but in the newer College of Dundee. Not only have I had the experience of seeing this residence develop from its foundation, but in earlier life I had the experience of being a student attending that college and living at home. I have been impressed by the fact that as the college has grown in size the place taken by the local student in student activities has diminished, and as the corporate spirit of the residence has grown the students living there have taken an increasing part in general student activities, so that the leaders who formerly came from the local students now come mainly from the students in residences.

I think that the need for student accommodation varies not only according to the size of the town but also according to the character of the town. In some cities with a large middle-class population, there are many people with small homes who are willing to add to their income by providing lodgings for students in a city such as Dundee the proportion of such houses is small compared with the number of houses where people have no opportunity of adding to their income by taking in lodgers, and our difficulty therefore, is that of finding suitable lodgings for students.

In University College Hall Dundee of which I am warden we have now 100 students in residence and by next October we hope to have 130 but we are only at the beginning of the problem of providing adequate accommodation for all who wish to be in residence. Dr Ashby's proposals would be valuable in towns such as Dundee, because there would be more hope of people in the suburbs welcoming the bed and breakfast type of student, unburdened by his care throughout the day

I too should like to get rid of the word hostel and to substitute the phrase 'hall of residence In our hall of residence in Dundee we are really trying in the first place to provide a home for students coming from a distance and not merely a formal institution. In terms of my appointment my wife is associated with me in the administrative duties of my office, and this has proved valuable particularly in the case of students from the Colonies and from a distance because we can give them a little more home life than if I simply acted as warden myself We can welcome them to our home which is a separate but an integral part of the residence. I think that Dr Ashby's suggestion might be of value in a town such as Dundee.

Professor C. M. ATTLEE (*Secretary of the Commission on the Planning of University Halls of Residence*): I do not want to speak on behalf of the members of the commission but purely personally, though I know that we still adhere to what we said in our report as to halls of residence being the best way to deal with the problem. During our consideration of the matter I think that two words which we always had in mind regarding the provision of these halls of residence were "gracious" and "dignified", because we hoped that something would be done which would influence the students apart from their studies in social and other ways. Speaking personally, and having listened to the schemes which lay emphasis on the extension of the union and developments along those lines, I still feel that they are not a second best but a third best, and that if we are going to have anything it must be something which emphasises from the point of view of the student the very important requirement, a room of his own or of her own. That is something which, with the best will in the world, cannot be obtained from the students' union.

Since being associated with the commission, I have not been closely connected with British universities but have had a number of years in Egypt, where I have seen the tremendous disadvantages of not having any kind of residence at all. I am now associated with an experiment by the Federation of Malaya Government which is concerned with a residential college, or what I prefer to call a residential place, for 300 students from Malaya.

If anybody had suggested to me six months ago that we might make halls of residence of aluminium I should have been shocked to the core, but now I feel, having seen what residential facilities can do in the Malaya College at Kirkby, outside Liverpool, I should change my views. This is on probably the worst site that could be chosen, and the buildings are the worst buildings, apart from the one fact that they provide every student with a room of his or her own. I have seen what the spirit of the students is in this place where they can come together or stop privately in their own rooms at will, and where the staff and students can talk together and have the advantages of evening conferences.

I should therefore like to emphasise the desirability of providing real residential accommodation for university students wherever it is possible to do so, even though the buildings are not what we should like them to be, and where they are not the kind of buildings we advocated in our report. This college at Kirkby was originally a hostel for people working in a filling factory, a big munition factory outside Liverpool. The rooms are very small, only about 10 by 9 feet,

all of them in hutments. Originally I believe three people used one room each sleeping in it for eight hours during the twenty four There were no amenities in the ordinary sense of the word at all yet these buildings have been turned into something which has already in less than a year a character and spirit about it which come largely from the fact that those students though their surroundings are not good are getting greater advantages than if they were living in lodgings or could only come together in small rooms which they would have to leave in the evening, as in the students union. They have a room of their own where they can keep their personal possessions and their books and that makes all the difference to the way in which they work I feel, therefore, that the aluminium hall of residence is the second best The third best may be the extension of the union, but I still think that first best is the hall of residence as proposed in the report of the commission.

Dr H H Lucas (*Aberdeen*) I have been a warden at Hull, and I was a member of the commission on halls of residence I too hope that the ease with which arrangements for students in a non-residential house can be organised will not lead us to abandon the idea of the residential system altogether On the other hand I feel that there is room for both these ways of solving the problems I am opposed to aluminium halls of residence but I am not opposed to wooden ones I was warden of a wooden one It was a very good experiment and I believe that the students got a lot out of it I know that I did The disadvantage of the aluminium one is that it lasts too long If you are going to build for a long time you should build properly but for a short time it does not matter so much

The obvious analogy which suggests itself for the type of arrangement which we have been considering to-day is that of the German universities and I understand, some of the Scandinavian and American ones I believe that we have something to learn from these places. For one thing it is important that there should be several in the university I am opposed to one enormous extension of the students union I think that the German system of the corporation house shows that it is not necessary to have a warden in the sense in which we understand it now in such a place though it is important to do rather more than the Germans have done to associate members of the staff with each house

Another thing which we might learn from the Germans is the way in which the former students of the corporation continue to remain associated with the house In most German universities they largely support the student corpora

tion houses. That is a bridge which is almost as important, to my mind, as the bridge between students and staff

Finally I disagree with a former speaker in that I feel it is essential for the members to dine together from time to time or at least to have some kind of collation together The commission in its report made a recommendation that halls of residence should be able to provide meals for many more than the number of resident students It is important that they should be able to eat and drink together I know of one ancient university where recently when the supply of coffee broke down temporarily in the staff common room the staff common room ceased to exist as a society for the duration of the period when there was no coffee.

*Professor* D G CHRISTOPHERSON (*Leeds*) Other speakers have referred to their previous experience so perhaps I may mention that I was formerly bursar of a Cambridge college with an endowment income of very much less than £50,000 I should like to support strongly what Dr Humphreys said about the value to the student of the task of administering the union or any other organisation with which he is associated and it seems to me that inevitably an organisation which consists of several parts is better from that point of view than a single large union Very few students can take a big part in the organisation of a single large union, but if there are many organisations an appreciable proportion of the students can have that kind of experience

There is another reason for having not one organisation but several It often appears that there are very marked similarities between all the Oxford and Cambridge colleges, but it seems to me that the differences between them are almost as important as if not more important than their similarities. One of their great sources of strength is that they can all be different they are all self-governing and therefore they are able to emphasise those aspects of university life which appeal to them in particular It seems to me that it is a very important feature whether we have halls which are truly residential or whether we have Ashby halls which are as it were organisations like a hall of residence in every way except that the students do not sleep there, that we should allow such organisations to develop along their own lines in different ways and to select their own students, knowing their own character and on the whole trying to continue over a long period of time the particular tradition and character suitable to a particular kind of undergraduate.

I do not for a moment suggest that we should try to segregate all undergraduates of a particular class in a particular hall, but I think that we should try to develop individual charact-

in our halls, and also in our clubs or whatever we call the type of hall in which the students have no sleeping accommodation. If we are to do that we must give great powers of self-government to the halls themselves. We must try to give them as much self-government as possible in financial matters and, what is even more important give them complete self-government in deciding what undergraduate shall belong to what hall, and in particular what senior members shall belong to what hall.

We have started this in a modest way in Leeds. Our experience is not yet long enough to say how it will work, but one of the problems which face us is to decide how we are going to find an organisation which will enable the halls to have a character which they can develop over many generations and which is not dependent on the particular personality however good, of an individual warden.

Professor R A MORTON (*Liverpool*) As Chairman of the Halls of Residence Committee at Liverpool I should like to say that some of us would feel a little anxiety if something akin to the American fraternity houses were to arise out of new experiments and I see more than a little tendency for movement in that direction. *I do not think, from my* experience at Liverpool that the students homes are nearly as bad as they have been painted. I think that many students have a room of their own at home and can entertain their friends at home and can have access to the university library for 48 to 50 weeks in the year instead of 30

We must in fairness recognise that the civic university is in some ways doing things which other universities cannot do Students do come to the universities, incidentally to do some work, and they get a room of their own in a residential hall which I do not think that they could get in quite the same way in a bleak additional kind of union. We have our university libraries open for many hours, and the students can use them in term up to 9.30 p.m. and 5 p.m. in vacation. In a university hall of residence there is the possibility of contact between a mature mind and an immature mind, whereas if we extend the principle of entire self-government by students to a new type of students union we are furthering the system of one immature mind acting on another immature mind.

We should be throwing something away there. I think that a great deal can be done very quietly by one skilful person acting as a student welfare officer who finds out those students who ought to be in hall because of peculiar personal circumstances and those who should be helped to find the right kind of lodgings A student welfare officer can tell

the university that certain places which offer lodgings are totally unsuitable, and a skilful welfare officer can get people to open their doors to students who would not take lodgers in the ordinary way and the student can then get what seems to me vital a room of his own.

Dr H F HUMPHREYS in replying to the discussion said As we have only five minutes between us in which to reply I should simply like to emphasise that I agree with all those speakers who have underlined the importance to a student of having a room of his own. He has a room of his own in lodgings, but he wants more than that he wants the chance of contact with other students and with staff. The latter is far more difficult than the former We are trying an experiment in Birmingham to do that on the lines which I indicated, but it is much more difficult in a hall of residence in a civic university than it is in an Oxford or Cambridge college, where the staff are as much a part of the college as the students are. That is why they are the ideal to which we all aspire but they are very expensive

Dr ERIC ASHBY in replying to the discussion, said I should like to emphasise what I said at the beginning, that the whole of this discussion is relevant only to the university which sees no prospect of accommodating students in halls of residence. I assume that we all take it for granted that the hall of residence is the best solution. If I wanted evidence of that, and of the fact that the architecture does not matter I should find it in the University of Bonn, where 200 students lived in an air raid shelter with no windows and where all the air had to be pumped in If the pumps failed the students would have suffocated yet the place had the most extraordinary spirit. We should not admit that any new experiment can replace residence if residence is really practicable but if it is coming only for the children who are born in 1980 we shall have twelve generations of 24,000 students in these civic universities for whom some kind of interim arrangements must be made

I was delighted that Mr Beckett said what he did, because I do not want you to think that the Queen's University has a party line on this subject Ours is a university which has peculiar problems which can only be solved by some special local arrangement I wish to register strong disagreement however with the suggestion that (as an environment for the student) homes are not so bad after all! It would be interesting to get for some of these civic universities the kind of information obtained for one big Dominion university from which it appeared that two-fifths of the students who

lived at home had bedrooms of their own and less than one fifth ever did their ordinary work alone in a room and that was in a country where there was no need to have fires for six months in the year It is possible that there are many places where the student has a room of his own at home and can even entertain in it but I ask people who believe that most students have these facilities to look at student life in their own cities What enquiries I have made in industrial cities have removed from me the illusion that there are many homes in which you could throw a party and not put a great strain on the family and in which you could work without there being a young brother or sister repeating French homework in the same room because it was the only room in the house with a fire That may not happen in the South, where you are more civilised but it does happen in the North where, after all a good many students live

I apologise for the use of the word hostel I agree that it is an offensive word. In return I ask you to remove the deplorable label from the plan which has been discussed this afternoon for two reasons one is to save personal embarrassment to one of your colleagues, and the other is that if you once put a label on a plan it loses its flexibility Many of the speakers have made it clear that each university has to solve this problem in its own way and to make divergencies from a plan is much harder than to invent something anew Some universities have already tried non residential halls, and it is only a modification of that idea which I would advocate for these nine civic universities.

The CHAIRMAN I should like to thank Dr Ashby and Dr Humphreys very warmly indeed for introducing this discussion

## SECOND SESSION

SATURDAY MORNING DECEMBER 13TH

## SUCCESS AND FAILURE AT THE UNIVERSITY

*Chairman* F T H. FLETCHER, M.A. D.Litt. D de l'U Nancy Professor of French, University of Liverpool and Immediate Past President, Association of University Teachers.

*The following notes and tables were circulated prior to the conference* —

A. Notes for Address by Sir ALEXANDER CARR SAUNDERS.

Title of this discussion limits it to events within the university and while any judgment of success or failure at the university depends on different kinds of evidence there is only one quantitative test—the degree examination. Universities are criticised for wasting money by selecting people for admission who eventually fail and they should have an answer to this. How often does a student leave the university without taking a degree? In the case of London there are marked differences in the failure rate as between different examinations and it is not easy to suggest a reason for this. Existing analyses of results are mostly directed to the past records of successes rather than to the failures.

A small and rough sample of results at the London School of Economics may help a little towards the central problem —how far are those who fail at examinations failures in other respects? In 1949, 305 students were admitted to read for B.Sc.(Econ.) of these 207 sat for and obtained the degree in 1952 35 had withdrawn from this course for various reasons not accounted as failure the rest (63) failed at examinations at the several annual stages and were not readmitted, only 2 per cent. in fact failing at the final examination.

Study of the records at entrance of the failing students and of their performance at Collections and their tutors reports shows that the failing students were not in evidence as the weakest students on entry but that their weakness was discovered early in their university careers. The assessments made as the result of interview before entry seem to have zero predictive value for later examination results. Professor Vernon s paper *The Assessment of Personality** makes it clear

*The Advancement of Science Vol IX No. 34 Sept. 1952* (British Association for the Advancement of Science)

that there are not yet any psychological tests which, if added to the ordinary entrance examination, could be relied upon to raise markedly the predictive value of the whole test in relation to future academic performance. The problem is receiving attention at the universities but it is obvious that methods of selection can be improved only slowly

There is clearly some positive correlation between examination performance and success in other spheres the reasons for failure need study—most of the failures are not successes in other respects but are people inconspicuous in the student body who are unable to cope with things in general. Failure at university examinations may be due to failure to discover how to coach themselves in students who were coached to a certain level at school there is a danger that universities may be tempted to undertake the task of coaching in order to reduce the failure rate

The evidence suggests that universities do not often go wrong when they turn a student out for failure but present university practice may be defective in permitting a certain class of successful student to take high honours without getting full advantage of other opportunities for intellectual development.

B Notes for Address by Professor Sir JAMES LEARMONTH.

I. Difficulty raised by title. What is success in medical student? So many different outlets for graduate that student "success measurable only by the not infallible examination system.

Curricula differ—in what university?

Ultimate success in medical profession depends on post graduate years.

II. My view of what medical course should bring to student —

(a) Ability to extract the significant from mass of evidence

(b) Ability to apply theoretical knowledge to unfamiliar situations.

(c) Moral courage to act with sense of urgency in emergencies.

(d) Some familiarity with hopes and fears of those of different outlook or different social class.

III *Desirable* features in student (and the trouble with many of these discussions is that people are unwilling to say the obvious) —

(*a*) Enough intelligence—average "beta" enough.

(*b*) Enough industry

(*c*) Reasonable health.

(*d*) Another but not over-riding interest.

IV *Undesirable* —

(*a*) In medicine against will

(*b*) Too much spurious "personality"

V *Why academic failure?*

In early years (data from Professor Sir Sydney Smith)

(*a*) Unfamiliarity with methods of instruction.

(*b*) Unfamiliarity with milieu

(*c*) Lack of intelligence or lack of industry

(*d*) Mental or physical ill-health.

In later years (data from Professor Sir Sydney Smith)

(*a*) Latent weakness in character—"led astray"

(*b*) Over-riding interests—e.g. in extracurricular activities.

(*c*) Over-riding interests within medicine.

(*d*) Again mental or physical upsets.

(*e*) Wrong sort of "teaching" for particular case.

(*f*) *Relative* failure of really able boy

VI *Generalisations* —

(*a*) Success as practitioner depends more on examples of teachers than on marks.

(*b*) All ultimate success more dependent on postgraduate training

(*c*) Same considerations apply to both sexes.

(*See Tables on pp. 42 & 43.*)

University of Edinburgh First Professional Examination

Percentage of failures based on first appearance

(a) Old Curriculum

| | Year | Physics | Botany | Chemistry | Zoology |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PRE WAR | 1935 | 23.0 | 9.8 | 31 1 | 30.4 |
| | 1936 | 20.2 | 6 9 | 40 5 | 30.8 |
| | 1937 | 20.3 | 8.6 | 18 3 | 27 3 |
| | 1938 | 17.0 | 7.6 | 30. | 11.2 |
| | 1939 | 17.4 | 12.0 | 20.1 | 20.6 |
| WAR | 1940 | 9.9 | 7.0 | 15 9 | 12 1 |
| | 194 | 2.8 | 9.8 | 19.8 | 12.0 |
| | 1942 | 12.2 | 6.9 | 19 0 | 9.5 |
| | 1943 | 10.0 | 6.3 | 13. | 8 3 |
| | 1944 | 17.0 | 7 5 | 15.7 | 9.6 |
| | 1945 | 19.5 | 7 5 | 23.2 | 9.7 |
| POST WAR | 946 | 8.5 | 5 7 | 17 5 | 9.8 |
| | 1947 | 4 | 5.5 | 6 3 | 10 9 |
| | 948 | 19.4 | 6.8 | 6.4 | 12.0 |
| | (b) New Curriculum | | | | |
| | 1949 | 16.5 | 7.0 | 25.6 | 14 3 |
| | 1950 | 21 3 | 13.9 | 26.6 | 20 3 |
| | 1951 | 19.3 | 14 3 | 39.4 | 19.6 |
| | 952 | 18 | 8.6 | 22.9 | 22.1 |

Comparison of the percentage of failures in the Professional Examinations during the periods 1930–1938 and 1944–1948.

These statistics are based on the results of the main examinations.

| | 1st Prof | 2nd Prof | 3rd Prof | Final Part I | Final Part II |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1930 | 62.1% | 5 .2% | 40.3% | 22.9% | 31.8% |
| 1932 | 53.5% | 38.4% | 22.8% | 16 5% | 30 8% |
| 1934 | 52.8% | 37.8% | 26.4% | 10.6% | 24.3% |
| 1936 | 55.7% | 38 7% | 23.4% | 9 8% | 25.6% |
| 1938 | 46.4% | 41.9% | 29.0% | 16 5% | 24.8% |
| *Average* | 54.1% | 41.8% | 29.4% | 13.3% | 27 5% |
| 1944 | 44 7% | 26.0% | 22.0% | 7.0% | 24.0% |
| 1945 | 41 7% | 27 2% | 23.0% | 3 3% | 23.5% |
| 1946 | 32.8% | 24.0% | 30.2% | 6.3% | 22 1% |
| 947 | 33.2% | 23.0% | 37.0% | 7.8% | 21.8% |
| 1948 | 34 6% | 21.0% | 30.8% | 7 4% | 23.0% |
| *Average* | 37.4% | 24.6% | 30.4% | 6.4 % | 23 3 % |
| 1949 | 33.5% | 33.0% | 23 8% | 7.4% | 18.8% |
| 1950 | 47 3% | — | 9.7% | 7.4% | 20 9% |
| 1951 | 47.4% | 30.8% | — | 6.8% | 22.6% |
| 1952 | 39.3% | 34.8% | 21 1% | — | 27 1% |

Final Professional Examination shows —

(1) the total percentage of failures
and

(2) percentage of failures of students who had not failed in any of the previous Professional Examinations.

| *Graduation Year* | (1) | (2) |
|---|---|---|
| 1934 | 24 3% | % |
| 1936 | 5.6% | % |
| 1938 | 24.8% | 3.2% |
| 940 | 23.6% | 6.5% |
| 1948 | 5.0% | 3 % |
| 1949 | 28.8% | 5 2% |
| 950 | 20.9% | 3% |
| 1951 | 22.6% | 4 6% |
| 195[illegible] | 27.1% | 4 8% |

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The CHAIRMAN Dr Foster has just told me that we have officially until 12 30 for our discussion. That is a very short time for what is a very long theme, and so I am sure you will want to get down to business as quickly as possible

As our Chairman yesterday afternoon said, this conference has usually been pretty fortunate in its opening speakers. I am sure you will agree that that is conspicuously the case to-day and, consequently one of the normal functions of the chairman—that of introducing the speakers—is not only completely superfluous on this occasion but would be, perhaps even impertinent

However there were two points of a general character that I thought I might make in the few minutes that I shall take. The first is that, since I am here in the capacity of a former President of the Association of University Teachers, I should like to express the satisfaction of my Association at being once again so closely associated in the organisation of this conference. There are, I know a number of people, even in my own organisation, who because we do not attempt to make policy or take decisions or pass high-sounding resolutions think we are a useless and otiose institution but I think the majority of us agree that it has proved a very valuable institution. Its discussions are studied far and wide and very often suggestions emanating from here are put into practice.

One rather interesting sidelight on the general interest that is taken in our discussions is the world-wide demand for the printed record of our proceedings. This, Dr Foster tells me,

is gratifying to the point of embarrassment. We cannot really fulfil all the demands made upon us.

The second point that I should like to make is that we seem to be passing through a period—I hope purely temporary—in which education is being spoken of almost exclusively in terms of retrenchment. There are to be reductions in the number of awards here, a reduction in the amount of awards there, curtailment of building programmes, cuts in other programmes, a reduction even in staffs, at any rate to the extent of not filling vacancies, and so on. It clearly behoves all sections of the academic world to stand together at any time and in particular at a time like this, and it seems to me that this conference is a visible demonstration of the unity and solidarity of the academic world.

That is all I have to say, except, perhaps, one final word. I was so struck yesterday by the initiative and eloquence of our colleagues from north of the Border and also by the fact that three—and I originally thought four—of the leading speakers to-day were either Scots or had close Scottish affinities that over breakfast this morning I was moved to lyrical expression. With your permission, I will read the results of my inspiration. It depends, I am afraid, upon the fact of Sir Alexander being a Scot, but he tells me he is not, which is rather a pity! It also depends upon the fact that three of our speakers have achieved the honour of knighthood.

As when the dazzling Northern Lights
  Set the dark heavens in a blaze
So may the light from Scottish knights
  Dispel the murk of English days.'

That is quite enough, perhaps, and so I will call upon our first speaker, Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders, to open the discussion.

SIR ALEXANDER CARR-SAUNDERS, M.A., LL.D., Litt.D., D. en Droit, D.Litt., F.B.A., Director, London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London: The title of this discussion, "Success and failure at the university," limits it to events within the university; it excludes, for example, the relation between performance at the university and performance in later life. There would be general agreement, I imagine, among those attending this conference that the judgment whether a student has been a success or a failure at a university is based on many different kinds of evidence, how far he has matured in character, how far he has broadened and deepened his interests and how far he has acquired an understanding of men and things. But of all the various kinds of relevant evidence there is quantitative measurement of only one, namely success or failure in those

examinations upon the result of which a degree is awarded. Not to get a degree is indisputably one kind of failure universities only admit to degree courses those who are judged likely to get a degree and the persons and authorities who give financial support to students intending to work for a degree only do so when they have a similar expectation

I propose to begin by some reference to this kind of failure, first, because as I have said, there are figures, and, secondly because failure of this kind is attracting the attention of those who give financial support to students at universities. It is pointed out that universities are free to reject any applicant for admission whose qualifications are not in their opinion adequate it is said that the failure rate would be reduced if universities selected better it is taken for granted that the support given to a student who fails is a waste of money and *it is concluded that the universities are responsible for this* waste I think that to all this the universities should have some considered answer

The facts relevant to this discussion are those relating to examination failures as a result of which a student leaves a university without a degree These facts are not easily accessible With the assistance of Dr Henderson the Academic Registrar of the University of London I have been able to study some figures for London These figures show large differences in the failure rate as between different examinations it is not unlikely that the figures for other universities would show the same. It is not easy I find, to suggest any obvious explanation of these differences, and it is necessary to bear in mind that to some extent the failing candidates may not form a homogeneous class. It is clear I think that in any case more analysis of failures would be repaying existing analysis is mostly directed to success as for instance to the previous records of candidates who get first-class honours or otherwise do well.

In the absence of investigations of this kind I propose to ask you to allow me to give some results of an admittedly very small and rough analysis made for me at the London School of Economics. As you will see this analysis was made with the object of probing a little way towards the central problem, as I take it to be, of this discussion—namely how far those who fail at examinations are failures in other respects.

In 1949, 305 full time students were admitted to the London School of Economics to read for the degree of B Sc (Econ.) It is a three years course At the end of the first year these students all took a test called Collections imposed by the School and not by the University at the end of the second year came Part I of the final examination and at the end of the third year *Part II* Ideally all the 305 students should

have sat for and gained the degree in 1952 In fact 207 did so Of the 98 who did not, 35 were not failures in the sense in which that term is used here they transferred to other courses, withdrew for personal reasons or can be accounted for in similar ways. 63 failed either at Collections and were refused re-admission by the School or at Part I or at Part II Only 2 per cent did in fact fail at Part II at the end of three years, and most of the elimination therefore took place not later than the end of the second year

In order to throw light on the reasons for failure the records at entrance of the failing students were carefully examined —that is the records of their performances at the higher school certificate examination or its equivalent—and at the entrance examination set by the School itself. These performances were classified into three groups—A or good B or fair and C or rather doubtful Their records were similarly classified as judged by their performance at Collections and by their tutors reports. The results were, at least to me interesting At entrance 41 per cent of the failing students were classed A 48 per cent B and 11 per cent. C. The evidence from Collections and tutors reports—received about the end of the first year—coincided almost exactly 5 per cent. were classed as A at that point 30 per cent were B and 65 per cent were C

This shows that the failing students were not on the evidence of entry tests the weakest students if we had refused to accept those who did least well in the entrance tests we should not have done much to reduce the number of failures. It also shows that the weakness of these students was in large measure discovered early in their university careers by two independent pieces of evidence—I mean their marks in Collections and their tutors reports. This raises some points of interest the first of which relates to entrance tests. On this matter I propose to say little because it has been much discussed but perhaps I might say something based on our experience at the School.

From our experience at the School we have one piece of evidence To secure entrance to the School our candidates were submitted to an entrance examination through which they were graded They were also interviewed (as a result of which they were classified as acceptable or to be rejected) and we took into account the marks which they obtained at the school certificate or intermediate examinations through which they qualified for entry on the degree course. When the results of this combined assessment at entrance are correlated with the results of examinations taken later it is shown that they have little predictive value as regards subsequent examination results.

The very interesting discussion in Professor Vernon's recent paper on "The Assessment of Personality"* which takes account of all the available evidence on this matter, shows that our result is not out of accord with this mass of evidence. Professor Vernon's paper also makes it clear that there are as yet no psychological tests which, if added to the ordinary entrance tests, could be relied upon to raise markedly the predictive value of the whole test in relation to future academic performance. If this is so, the universities have an answer to their critics who say that selection could and ought to be improved at once: no doubt methods of selection will be improved as time goes on, but it seems that the improvement can only be slow. The universities might, I think, be more ready to defend themselves than they are and to point to the numerous investigations into, and discussions of, entrance tests. I know this is a very summary reference to an important problem, but it is receiving much attention and I want to pass on to other matters which are less discussed.

What sort of people are these failures? Here I have to rely on my admittedly very sketchy investigations reinforced by such impressions as I have picked up through experience of university life. In my samples there is little evidence that ill health, difficult personal circumstances or deliberate idleness are important causes of failure. Nor is there evidence of excessive expenditure of time on games, clubs and such-like activities. My general impression is that the failures are people who are inconspicuous in the student body, rather lost and, in general, not coping with things. Few of them were definitely successful as judged by criteria other than by performance at examinations and they seemed in the main to be getting less out of university life than the average student. This is not to say that they got nothing, but in order to justify their maintenance at a university in spite of examination failure it would be necessary to show that they were gaining more than if they had passed their time elsewhere. I might add that the still prevalent notion that examination failure is often accompanied by success of other kinds is probably derived from knowledge of the former conditions of things at the older universities which have passed away there and have never existed at the newer universities—I mean the presence of a body of lively students who got a lot out of the university but had no care whether they got a degree or not.

Let me now turn my attention for a moment to the other end of the scale and ask what sort of people are those who do best at examinations. Here I have to rely on mere impressions—having made no special observations on my own students. I am inclined to suggest that cases where high examination

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* *See footnote to p. 39.*

success—as judged by first-class honours—goes with little evidence of success elsewhere in university life are more common than cases where examination failure goes with success elsewhere We all know those cases where a student graduates with first-class honours and seems to have got little else out of his university career At the same time there is clearly some positive correlation between examination performance and success in other spheres—games excluded, about which I shall say a word in a moment—but this is only to be expected, for it is the students with good mental capacity who have it in them to widen and deepen their interests while working for their degree

Reverting to the failures it is worth while to ask more directly than I have yet done why they fail In my sample mediocre performance at entrance tests appears to be of little importance as a cause of failure. I should say that in this sample a special factor may account for some failures few of these people had studied at school the subject which they took up at the university and possibly some of them were unfitted to study this new subject or found it little to their taste.

But what about the others—the majority of the failures? In university circles various explanations are currently offered. It is said that at school some pupils are worn out by examination pressure that others have not got it in them to develop any further I am somewhat dubious about these theories and suggestions To me a more interesting explanation is that these people get along at school where they are coached drilled spoon-fed or crammed but fail when called upon to exercise initiative at the university Those who say this are I believe on the track of an explanation which partially accounts for the facts, but in putting it forward in this way they do not quite hit the mark. It is true that students at universities are asked to work in a way that is different from the practice in schools but they are seldom asked to work in the way that is often assumed.

Work at a university is described as introducing a student to a field—philosophy history or literature as it may be—and providing him with a map a compass and help in encouraging him to explore That may be the ideal but it is not the practice as I know it (I should perhaps say in my limited experience of the newer universities in which I have served) at least in the first year or the first two years of a degree course The picture is rather that of obligation to study a number of subjects (in the B Sc.(Econ.) examination there are nine subjects in the first two years) As to the difference between school and universities I will put it this way that at the former he is crammed, while at the latter he is supposed to do this for himself Let me say at once that I am using exagger

ated language which I could not defend for a moment I am merely putting it in that way in order to make my point in a few words Let me also say that in those schools which somehow manage to save their sixth-form pupils from the ill-effects of the (to me) excessive requirements of performance at the General Certificate of Education, work is done which is far nearer the university ideal than at the university itself. Passage to a university may indeed mean retrogression in methods of work. If this is at all true failure at university examinations is not so much failure in general initiative, as failure to discover how to coach oneself And the picture I gave earlier of the failures is the picture of just such people. Herein, I think, lies a danger for universities. Troubled by the number of failures, and unable to reduce the number by improving entrance tests they may resort to taking on this task of coaching In this way they might push or drag a few more students through examinations. I fear that this may already be happening and so far as it is, it is clearly a departure from right university practice.

Again, if this is at all true a stricter adherence to what is admittedly right university practice would mean still more failures This is a fact which in my opinion must be faced. It may be possible by one method or another to train all or nearly all those who can pass university entrance tests (provided they keep in health and do not idle) to a standard sufficient to satisfy the examiners at the Finals Examination. But the proportion of those who pass these entrance tests and can then go on to work successfully in the true university manner may be less than is currently supposed.

May I now try to draw these remarks together Of the various kinds of success at universities one stands apart—namely success in sports and games. By this I do not mean that it is a kind of success to be despised—very far from it. All I mean is that there is no reason for expecting success in this sphere to be correlated with other forms of success depending as it does on bodily gifts. Other forms of success in a university depend on mental gifts coupled with initiative, and one is entitled to expect and hope for a higher correlation between all the various kinds of success than is in fact the case. As things are the student with a good brain who lacks any exploring interest, wide-ranging curiosity or initiative may do very well in examinations, the more widely gifted student may and not infrequently does turn somewhat away from academic study and so does only moderately well in examinations, or less well than be might do because the study demanded of him requires over-emphasis on the capacity for absorption and fails to satisfy his instinct for experience and exploration.

Next, I should say that he must be able to examine, and perhaps to accept contrary opinions to his own quite calmly something which is rather more difficult than it may appear to be. I should say that he had to be taught that it is a very precious thing to recognise the limitations of his own knowledge I should also say that he had to be taught to recognise hopes, fears and aspirations on the part of those of a different outlook or a different social class—if you do not like the phrase different social class I will substitute different environment —from his own. The older I get, the more I see sick people as rather isolated, who demand sympathy Sickness seems to isolate them from their fellows, as it does with animals. The medical student must be taught to enter into that world of their own which sick people produce

Lastly there should be another desirable quality to be tested in the final examination which unlike the previous examinations which are academic in standard, is a civic duty on the part of the examiners I should like to see developed in the medical student the ability to initiate and carry through a plan of action which involves not only professional considerations but personal considerations as well In medicine—at least, in the practice of medicine—as in every other form of human activity of which I am aware the key to success is the timing of action. I would remind you of the saying of Shaw s Prime Minister in *The Apple Cart* that one man who has a mind and knows it can always beat the men who haven t and don t It is that sort of self-confidence that one wishes to see in the best products of a medical school

Should the boy be a medical student at all? I must confess I think that universities pay too much attention to trying to get the perfect entrant There is a magnificent piece of Churchilliana in one of the appendices to his latest volume To insist on perfection spells paralysis I commend that to the people who try to impose standards which are too high upon those about to enter the curriculum of medicine.

I should say a boy ought to be a medical student if he honestly feels he has a call to medicine and has chosen a medical career of his own volition With reference to intelligence, a good beta has enough intelligence to be a good doctor Very clever people do not really understand what goes on in the minds, or do not understand the hopes and fears of people who are much less intelligent than they are, and they are apt to get impatient with them, and impatient is the last thing a doctor should be.

He should have enough industry and he should have enough perseverance for which latter I do not know a test One of the saddest things in medicine is the intelligent boy without

industry but perhaps even sadder is the industrious boy without intelligence. I would agree with Samson Wright that when we try to mould our product we should not try to choose the best but should try to exclude the worst. I hope for a great deal from the report forthcoming from Sir Frederic Bartlett, of Cambridge on the problem.

The medical student should have another interest or other interests which help to keep him sane because the impact of sickness on some of these young people is rather more dreadful than one thinks. I believe, too that he should have reasonable health, because certain periods of his curriculum —if not the whole of it—make some demand on his physical resources.

I was interested to see that Cecil Rhodes, who died very young assessed as the qualities for his scholars—postgraduate scholars it is true—scholarship as to four-tenths brutality as to two-tenths tact and leadership as to two-tenths and unctuous rectitude as to two-tenths.

He should not be a medical student if he is a medical student against his will sometimes parents push boys into medicine. He should not be a medical student if he has pre-determined what he is going to do with the rest of his life sometimes a boy comes along determined to be a cutter His personality is somewhat immature, which is all too common in the medical student. He should not be a medical student if his personality is flashy—he will tend to the newer and perhaps unproven remedies—or if he has a colourless personality about which Sir Alexander spoke. But I do not mean to exclude people with bizarre personalities especially in relation to research, because as I have said before in this hall it is quite true that good research often goes with a certain sluttishness of character

We get all these types in medicine and we must ask why some of them fail. I am indebted to our Dean Sir Sydney Smith, for the data printed on pages 42 and 43. In the first year students fail partly because they are, on the whole I think, scholastically less able. They fail, as Sir Alexander said in the case of arts, because they may be unfamiliar with methods of instruction but, as in arts, in medicine the first years are largely factual perhaps a little too factual so that students do not realise the need to change their method of approach. Lord David Cecil said that education was a ladder and not an escalator I think the universities may have a rung missing here.

The second table on page 42 illustrates the platitude that experience teaches "—the older students get and the more examinations they sit, the better they get on However it is an extraordinary thing—this is a point about which I would

disagree with Sir Alexander—that in the first year in medicine at least if the teachers do not know who are going to get on, the students know the students will tell you who are going to be unsuccessful

The student sometimes fails because he is unfamiliar with his milieu The university itself may be strange to a boy it may be and quite often is strange to a boy who comes from the country or from an island or from a poor home to enter into the workaday world itself, quite apart from the university surroundings He may be in a strange social milieu These are the boys who benefit by staying in hostels early in their university career if this is arranged they generally do well

Students fail because of lack of sufficient intelligence—at least in medicine although apparently not in arts. They fail because of lack of industry That is sometimes so in the case of the clever boy who finds the elementary type of science demanded in medicine too easy he may have done most of it at school Boys also fail—I think this is possibly an extraordinarily important thing—because they come to do medicine at an extremely sensitive turbulent age in their mental make-up They are really not grown up they are growing up and the impact of medicine—and sometimes the excessive impact, because they will try to go into hospitals and see operations and so on—is often too much for these boys They can be helped by a wise psychiatrist provided that the psychiatrist is also a wise physician and preferably a man of the world.

It is sometimes said that what affects these boys is the crisis of the single examination If that is so I think it is not a bad thing So often in after life they will have to meet crises if they go out into practice and if they cannot meet less important crises early or after some little training then they must not adopt the profession of medicine or at least, the practice of medicine

In the later years the ignorant and the lazy should have been eliminated.

There is a certain small proportion of students who are what is colloquially called led astray " in later student life. I think it is better that these should transfer their activities to some other profession or possibly to some other faculty It is possible to over-sentimentalise medicine, but, without being sentimental about it, I would say that there is absolutely no excuse for having in a class in a university a boy or a girl who is not doing his or her best. That is a duty which they have to their fellow men. I should have not the least compunction in expelling one who was not doing his or her best

Sometimes we find that over interest in extra-curricular

activities both inside and outside the university is hampering a boy's career That is never a sufficient excuse for someone who wishes to be a doctor Frequently we find that a boy is impelled to study some specialty or to make experiments in some special technique which has attracted him during his course and he may spend so much time on this that he fails to observe the elementary formality of getting through some simple examination These boys can be brought back to reason by a talk with the professor of the subject or the dean.

There are mental upsets in later student life of a rather different sort because the students are less adolescent and we find that the most important of these are matters of sex and a quite unrestrained religious fervour an almost revivalist fervour A good psychiatrist who is also a good physician will deal with these matters satisfactorily a bad psychiatrist merely goes on supplying students with specious excuses for failing in examinations.

One sometimes finds that a boy is unfitted to his medical school. There are large and small schools, there are different types of teaching and there are different types of teachers There is something in this but it is not always a good excuse for failure We have recently had a spate of long papers in the medical journals telling us where we are at fault in our medical curricula but I read these with some cynicism because I observe that these papers are written by professors who are usually the highly successful products of the systems they are decrying

The figures for the final examination which show the success and failure of a medical school are contained in the table on page 43 where you will see in column 2 the proportion of students who have not failed in any of the previous professional examinations, and that, of course is quite small This means that, given ability of a reasonable sort and industry the medical course does not present any insuperable difficulties to the average boy

I do think it is very important in medicine—and I think it is something that we fail to do in medical schools—to take account of the *relative* failure of the really exceptional boys who sometimes find that irreproachable ambition or the creative spirit not only fails to find an outlet but occasionally is almost stifled by the humdrumness of some of the material with which they have to make themselves acquainted. That can only be put right by introducing an honours group in medical schools—perhaps not in all but certainly in some—and that might apply perhaps, more particularly to those who are attracted to pre-clinical subjects.

I asked a very able young woman what she thought of the position of women students as regards success or failure and

h said What goes for a man goes for a woman My personal view is that there are probably too many women in medicine and that some of them should be encouraged to take up some branch of the social services which would give them an outlet for their quite proper wish to serve their fellow creatures

I sum up now by saying that I should like to see more done for the alphas in medicine. I should like to see the incompetents ruthlessly shed because of their responsibilities to their fellow men. I should also like to see it more widely recognised in the universities that if a man is going to practise medicine either as a general practitioner or as a consultant his success depends much more on what he remembers his clinical teachers doing than on any factual instruction he may have received from them. This is, perhaps, the biggest point of all it is a point so large that I commend it to you for separate consideration at some future date.

The CHAIRMAN Before throwing the subject open to discussion, I should like to point out that it is open to anyone including guests to take part and I hope that many will feel moved to participate. Indeed I trust that the spirit of the *Black Watch*, which was so very much in evidence yesterday will today inflame the whole conference.

Dr D CHAPMAN (*Liverpool*) I have a feeling that the method of Sir Alexander Carr Saunders analysis obscures one quite important problem. I have found as an examiner in three different departments that we tend every time to adjust our standards to the total performance in any one year so that there is a remarkable consistency from year to year and between departments in the proportion of failures if not of successes. This makes it impossible to discuss success and failure between departments and therefore focuses the whole of our attention on the student.

I believe that this dependence on the evidence of marking causes us to neglect the essential factor that any failure is a failure of teacher and pupil and not merely of pupil, and I feel that almost everything we have heard this morning described the failure of pupils and not the failure of the teachers.

I am engaged in what the Americans call a cross-disciplinary subject, sociology and I teach in three distinct and different departments. I find that the proportions of successes and failures of postgraduates in these departments are similar but I believe that three-quarters of those who succeed in one subject would fail if examined by the same standards as in another but that these students would succeed in the second subject if taught by the teachers in that depart

ment. That is to say the essential issue is the quality of the relationship between the teacher and the pupil, the enthusiasm which the teacher can generate in the pupil

This is not always a simple matter of example and the ability to teach it is also a matter of understanding and recognition of the personal problems of the students We have heard valuable references to good psychiatrists and there were things of a less esoteric nature with which Professor Morton dealt yesterday A good tutorial system and a good student welfare officer can contribute also to the reduction of failures from these kinds of cause I would stress that success or failure is success or failure of the profession of the university teacher

Professor F H NEWARK (*Queen s Belfast*) As I understood Dr Chapman, he invited us to stand in a metaphorical white sheet beating our own breasts and saying Mea culpa My impression is that there is no need for undue alarm about this matter When we find a long list of failures—not too long but a respectably long one—we know that the university is doing its job which is to separate merit from mediocrity

*There is a story about an American university in the faculty* of arts of which it was noticed over a number of years that in the first year examination 26 per cent of the students regularly failed So they called for the advice of the department of psychology and the department of psychology with all the confidence one expects from psychologists, was able to say that those failures could easily be predicted at entrance. A test was applied and the 26 per cent indicated by the psychologists were diverted from the degree course into a special diploma course created for their benefit. The remaining 74 per cent went on for the examination—in which as usual 26 per cent. failed! Of course there were bound to be failures. The story is probably apocryphal but the moral is clear What had happened was that the examiners had raised their standard Let us not decry the raising of standards by examiners if our examination results showed successes of 95 96 or 98 per cent. they would attract all the suspicions which usually attach to elections on the other side of the Iron Curtain where like figures are returned

Even so I think there is, perhaps something to inquire about this morning, and if I would attach blame to universities it would not be for what is done during the university course but for what is done at entrance in the matriculation tests.

There are two things to be said about entrance tests. One is that universities have almost completely abdicated their functions in this respect. In the case of most universities to-day the majority of the students come in on exemptions

m ans of testing the faultlessness of the system on which we depend for sifting our merit from lack of merit.

At present there is an entrance examination and if the student passes it he is interviewed and admitted to university courses He is made to believe that he is fit to enter the university Later on he is disillusioned about himself as such as you are Is it not a great waste of national resources the time of the teacher and the university and the opportunity of the student ?

Where lies the fault ? In the examination hall random questions are flung No doubt the system can recognise the one who is thorough in the subject but we are not passing only that one who is thoroughly prepared we are also passing one who gets say 35 per cent. of the marks. That is we also allow in a certain amount of lack of knowledge on the part of the student We do this by shooting random questions at the student Is this the proper way to do it ?

When someone is to deliver a lecture he knows the subject beforehand and prepares for it deliberately in order that he may do well His performance is judged after affording him all this opportunity Why should it not be like that in judging the mastery of the student over his subject ? Why should we not train the student for a deliberate purpose in a deliberate way instead of asking him to appear for some unseen questions ? Surely we should extend and deepen our testing system and not let the demon of chance play a part in determining the merit or otherwise of the student. I should like to hear the suggestions of those present for solving this problem.

Professor R. A. MORTON (*Liverpool*) I should like to ask Sir James Learmonth two simple questions But perhaps they are not as simple as they seem to be. The first one is How does the layman tell a good psychiatrist from a bad one ? That is a perfectly serious point Many of us occasionally have to hand over the troubles of our students to somebody who knows more about it than we do but we do not get unanimity in the opinions of the medical profession about the appropriate persons to whom we should send the students.

As to my second question my impression from examining at the second M B level is that one thing needed in order to pass the second M.B is a determination to aim first at about 55 per cent in three subjects simultaneously rather than to know really a good deal about any one part of it and the second thing needed is a good natural memory I suspect that if we really knew how to choose potential medical students so that they would go through the university machine without a hitch we should be measuring memory I should like to

ask Sir James whether he thinks we should be far wrong in searching for doctors if we chose the people with the good natural memories.

Professor Sir JAMES LEARMONTH Perhaps I might reply now about psychiatrists Of course opinions differ about psychiatrists. It is the university's responsibility it usually has people who can give advice whether a psychiatrist is good or not. I think the advice should be given by medical men because lay people are as you know almost entirely ignorant of medical matters and are very liable to be led astray by will-o the-wisps of all sorts, not only in psychiatry but also in other branches of medicine and surgery We are fortunate in Edinburgh —perhaps that is why I stress the point—in that we have Sir David Henderson in whom we have not only a great psychiatrist but also a very fine general physician.

With regard to the point about memory I thought I had made my own view on that point clear Memory does matter a great deal in the first second and third professionals, but in the final examination—which I consider should be not an academic examination but a civic duty on the part of the examiners—what is tested is not memory or should not be memory but the capacity of the students to cope with simple situations which they may or may not have encountered during their medical training I do not think they can do that entirely by memory They may do it partly by memory of what they have seen and of what they have read, but I do not think it is entirely a matter of memory They must be able to reason from first principles.

The Rev Canon S. L. GREENSLADE (*Durham*) I wish to draw attention to one particular difficulty but before I do that there are three points which I should like to make briefly

As a matter of fact the Durham Division has already been anxious about the number and incidence of failures, and we already have a committee investigating it. I am not a member of it and cannot tell you about its progress.

My second brief point is that what we are discussing this morning may have something to do with what we are going to discuss this afternoon. So far as failure or success in examinations is concerned, at any rate, if vacation employment is to be regarded as quite a normal feature of university life it may be that we shall have to drop our standards in respect of the factual knowledge demanded, though certainly not I hope in respect of other ways in which one measures ability I hear from my colleagues, more particularly on the science side, *that they think men are being overloaded by great* demands for sheer knowledge. We can perhaps discuss

afternoon whether vacation employment has anything to do with that

Another point that I want to make is a very familiar one I want to insist on the importance of some kind of tutorial system because I am convinced through my own experience of men whom I have had for that kind of work that many of them either would not have passed their examinations or—this is really more important—would certainly not have derived full benefit from the intellectual side of their work if they had been left to lectures alone To what extent universities are able to provide such tutorial work outside lectures I do not know At Durham it varies a good deal between the different faculties.

I want particularly to raise the difficulty of the man who is good, or looks as if he will be good, in most of his work but is lacking in some particular tool. I am thinking especially of languages. It comes up in two ways. First there is the lack of ability to express oneself in one's own language. There again, I am told by my scientific colleagues that they are constantly hampered by men whose science is good but who have never been taught to express themselves in English. *Clearly one has to do something about that at the university* stage but I think it is fair for us to keep rubbing it into the schools, pointing out that failures which are blamed on the universities may really be the responsibility of the schools and that it is their responsibility and duty to teach people to express themselves in their own language

The other side of this comes up most acutely in my subject theology and it must to some degree be relevant in other spheres and that concerns knowledge of classical languages. In my own case, I am allowed complete discretion in deciding whether a man may read for honours theology or not and I have to consider whether or not I can risk accepting a man who knows little or no Greek. I do in fact take a good many risks and I am glad to say that on the whole they come off

I am stating that as a fact and as a difficulty in which I find myself I do not pretend to know the answer but I suppose there are two sides to it. It seems to me that it is right for us to keep on going back to the schools and asking *them to make it possible for people who want to learn these* languages to do so Many men coming to me would have been perfectly willing to learn Greek but never had any chance to do so

But the other side of it—and it may be possible for some of you to comment on it—is the duty of the university We also insist on Hebrew and, quite naturally accept our obligation to teach Hebrew from the beginning but at Oxford, Cambridge and Durham it has not in the past been accepted

as one's normal duty [illegible] b-en u ng (i.e. to honours candidates) It [illegible] ought now to be facing that obligation [illegible] should [illegible] it [illegible] natural one No doubt this is a [illegible] but of detail. However the whole problem of [illegible] bility to do a certain thing whereas in all other respects the man seems the right one to take the honours degree course is something which must trouble all those who have to decide whether or not a man should do it.

Miss E. M. SPELMAN (*Nottingham*) Without undervaluing at all the importance of good welfare services and tutorial systems, it is very important indeed to distinguish between a student who is going through a temporary difficulty and will make good and a weak student who is never going to be very much use as far as being a university graduate is concerned.

We are running into a very real danger of propping up by means of welfare services students who are not really able to be valuable graduates of the university and we need very much to combine common sense with kind heartedness towards the students with whom we come into close contact.

Mr G McSPADDEN (*Queen's Belfast*) We are north of the Border also but I am afraid that it is a better known but less respected one than that referred to by the Chairman this morning

I should say first that I feel that the person who knows best the student's difficulties is his co-student, particularly if they have been attending as undergraduates a comparatively new university at a period when the present amenities did not exist

I believe that one of the factors which result in the percentage of failures is that the secondary schools are responsible for a lack of direction in studies to pupils who are sufficiently old and sufficiently capable to qualify for the university but who are not sufficiently mature to appreciate their vocation.

I suggest that one of the remedies for that is really an endorsement of what Professor Newark referred to and it would eliminate a lot of flotsam and jetsam that is that the university either through a supplemental form of matriculation examination or an independent examination, should insist on seeing that the student has had a good, broad education and not merely a cramming course on selected subjects. When they cram as they do to-day they are getting through their matriculation or equivalent entrance examination without the slightest idea whether they wish to proceed any further

It is suggested that you should have examination by selective mental grading I am very sceptical about that. No matter how able the psychiatrist is from past experience

I do not think he can at that stage determine the weak student who qualifies well in his entrance examination but falls down when he comes to his later examinations.

The next difficulty you have is lack of interest or lack of vocation in your subjects. This may be as a result of the great increase in state financial aid to students. In Northern Ireland where state aid has only come to the fore to a large degree in recent years we experience difficulty springing from this cause. The fond parent says that little Johnny is going to be a doctor or a lawyer or a dentist. Little Johnny is persuaded into taking examinations to enter the university and he enters it but all the time Johnny would much prefer to drive a tractor—and eventually he would probably make as much money in that work. It is difficult to find a remedy in a case like that because he gets through his entrance examination. You may say that the tutorials and the check-up in the usual manner provide a remedy but you cannot throw out a boy who has done well in his entrance examination until you have seen him part of the way through his course then there is a waste of public money.

As an instance of people who have not got a vocation—it is not confined to young people—I knew in my undergraduate days a man of 35 40 years whose fond aunt had left him £400 a year so long as he remained a student at the university. He remained a student for 10 years until the war broke out and the salary he would get in the R.A.M.C became greater than £400 a year. That was his vocation.

I hope you do not mind my digressing facts sometimes help particularly if they are amusing.

There was the young man who went to the university but had no idea what he wanted to do. His father was a doctor and wanted his son to become a doctor. The son was in rooms which were not at all attractive for study and he was fond of dancing and cards. His father wondered why he missed so many class examinations, and called at the digs one evening expecting to find his son studying. The landlady said he would not find his son there at that time of day and that he would not be in for an hour or so. The doctor replied that his son ought to be free from lectures at that time. The landlady replied I did not know he was a student. I thought he was a night watchman.

When you get this sort of case it is very difficult to remedy but the remedy seems to lie with the welfare officer. I would be against the invasion of privacy and against probing round the student's lodgings. Welfare officers should hold a welfare hour or welfare time at which they can be consulted privately by students who are in difficulties.

Another point which one or two of the speakers this morning

have mentioned is a criticism of the lecturing As a non academic member of a senate I am untrammelled by any inhibitions in regard to criticism. One of the most disheartening things for a first year student is to attend a lecture where the lecturer speaks so rapidly that the student is so busy taking down notes as to be unable to follow the purpose and intent of the lecture. The student takes down the notes and has to read them all afterwards. Nothing is so disheartening especially if he is not familiar with the dialect or accent of the lecturer or if he is a foreign student. Lecturers could greatly assist by seeing that their lectures are not merely a matter of reading out of their notebooks. One professor I knew went into the class room with a rush. The door would be open and he would go straight in mount the rostrum, open his notebook and start the lecture straightaway It has been known—this is many years ago he is not there now—for him to open his notebook and start lecturing before a solitary student entered the class room.

There is also the problem of the student who loses interest entirely in the lectures. About 12 months ago an American student at a certain university in Ireland approached his lecturer and said that he had great difficulty in following the lectures as the lecturer spoke so very rapidly and asked him if he would have any objection if a fellow student brought in an "Emidicta —one of the new dictaphones—so that the lectures could be recorded and played back afterwards. The lecturer was most indignant But, having lost interest in the lectures about a week later the boy was found crossing the border with prohibited goods and was fined £1,000. That is an example of the result of losing interest in lectures!

Ill-health and worry are also two very big problems, and the undergraduate is very reluctant to come out into the open and admit them. Here is a need for the services of the welfare officer and regular medical inspection.

If we cannot get remedies for such failures, perhaps we may have a new qualification, which has been known in certain universities abroad, of "Failed B.A." or Failed M.B !

Professor J L. Montrose (*Association of University Teachers*) The fact that yet another Belfast speaker has come to the rostrum may make you feel that the motto this morning is not that of the Black Watch but that of a famous Northern Ireland regiment Clear the way !

I think I should express the feelings of delight of all of us at hearing the first speech from one who is not a professional lecturer

I want very briefly to express my agreement with some of the speeches which we have heard and to add one new point.

As to my agreement I believe that what has been said can be expressed in this way that the failure of the student at the university may well be a criterion of the success of the university itself I think that follows from these considerations. Our tests for entry to the university are largely derived from considering whether or not the candidate has been successful in his school education. If the university education is successful it will introduce the student to higher methods and to a higher level of education and, therefore it follows that mere success in school education is not bound to mean success with this different kind of education There must therefore be some failures by students if the university is being successful in going beyond school education.

I now wish to refer to a point which has not yet been made It seems to be assumed that failure by the student in his examinations at the university means total failure by him, failure to have derived any benefit from his university education at all I think that that may not be right At any rate speaking from my own experience I know some of my own students who have failed in examinations but who have clearly benefited from their university education.

In my own faculty we make a serious endeavour to see that our examinations are not mere tests of memory but are tests of broad intellectual ability tests of problem-solving A significant number of students who have failed in examinations have told me how much indeed they have appreciated their university education. They have appreciated the fact that there is some other approach to study than mere cramming and they have appreciated the value and importance in general life of reasoning about things. If these people have learnt nothing else they have at least learnt one thing which Sir James Learmonth considered of very great importance and that is a knowledge of their own limitations.

Professor T B. L WEBSTER (*London*) I wish to make three points very briefly

My first point is in answer to Canon Greenslade I can only speak for Greek as a technical subject which may be needed as a tool. Personally I am quite clear that it is the duty of a university to teach Greek from the start to people for whom it is needed, and I will go one step further than that and say that universities should teach a special sort of Greek for theological students.

My second point concerns a difficulty arising from the new examination system. In the case of classics at any rate we have got to know that people have a certain technical proficiency when we take them in. In the old days before the war we knew the value of the good mark in the higher certificate

examination. We knew perfectly well from our experience as examiners in that examination that that mark was applied with extreme care and that the borderline between the good and the no good was watched with extreme care. Now with the new examination we have no such good mark, and that is a real difficulty for the future.

For my third point I wish to quarrel very slightly with Sir Alexander Carr Saunders on the subject of the interview. We hope that the certificate of education will tell us that our people are technically proficient. What we do not know is whether they have got this technical proficiency in their stride or whether they have got it with great labour. I think you can find out something about that by interviewing people before you take them into your school. There is something else that you can also find out and that is whether they are the sort of people you and your colleagues whom you know pretty well, will be able to teach. Both are extremely valuable pieces of information to have.

Dr J. W. Baker (*Leeds*): During the last few years I have had more to do with some of the failures than I have with the successes. It has been my job to talk to these failures.

Both the main speakers have stressed that one of the reasons for failure is the difficult transition from school to university in all its aspects: methods of study, different surroundings and so on. My experience is that this is an exceedingly important factor and I think that experiments which are at present being conducted in the way of freshers conferences and short pre-university training courses are very important approaches to the problem which should be given serious consideration. If we examine our methods of preparing prospective students for the transition, we may do a lot to reduce failures at least in the early stages of courses.

For my second point I want to emphasise what was said by Miss Spelman. In dealing with these early failures we need to ensure that we have some system whereby each initial failure has personal individual attention in order to ascertain whether the cause is some maladjustment or temporary difficulty or whether there is likely to be a repetition of the failure because of the student's inability to cope with university work. Then in the event of subsequent failure at a later stage we should be in a position to determine whether real lack of ability in the student renders discontinuance of his course desirable in the best interests of both student and university.

Dr A. H. Macklin (*Aberdeen*): Sir Alexander Carr Saunders made it very clear that what was desirable in the general

training of a student was something more than an academic training and that in measuring success one would have to measure something more than the student's academic performance. Nevertheless the discussion has largely resolved itself into a discussion of academic performance and methods of teaching

In my department in the last five years we have taken figures which show that 25 per cent of our students are all-round active students 25 per cent. are, apart from the course of study totally inactive and the other 50 per cent. range from a high to a low average. In assessing the reasons for this extra-curricular inactivity we find that about 30 per cent. of the students have a deliberate reason for it they have set aside all the other activities as being something which interferes with their goal which is to pass their examinations as they fall due In some ways this is a laudable desire but in the case of two-thirds of these students we find that it is largely a matter of lack of initiative.

This emphasises the point made by Sir Alexander of the quality of initiative in the selection of students. In analysing academic performance we find that of those who may be graded as exceptional 60 per cent. are also active in other respects. We also find that about 25 per cent. are totally inactive in other respects, which means that they leave the university with a degree but with very little else

I should like to ask two questions which carry suggestions. The first is Would it not be a good thing for all students on arrival to have made clear to them just what the university expects of them, pointing out that the university does not require them merely to get down to it and swot ' but would like them to take part in other activities ? That would solve the problem of the people who think that it is their duty to get down to work and do nothing else. It might also be a useful stimulus to those who lack the initiative to do these things on their own. Would it not be a good thing to make this explanation to students a definite procedure in the university ?

Secondly it has been made clear throughout the discussion that great value attaches to extra-curricular activities and it has been stated that all the universities are able to assess is the ability of the student to score marks at examinations and that there is no way of assessing the all round activities of the student therefore would it not be a good thing to set up a registry of extra-curricular activity ? The students would be required to report to that registry say once a year and in charge of it there would be a welfare officer who as has been stressed several times would have to be very carefully selected a man who would take a sympathetic interest in these people,

record their activities for the benefit of the university and at the same time try to advise the students and guide them along extra-curricular lines and, where there was shyness or difficulty perhaps also make the contacts for them.

The CHAIRMAN Our time is beginning to run out We shall invite our leading speakers to make any comments they wish upon the discussion and, therefore, I think we had better limit further interventions to about two.

Dr R. J STILL (*Leeds*) I should like to say something about the relationship between health and student performance in the university Quite apart from the question of illness or disease mental or physical, many of us have asked ourselves whether there is any relationship between physical or temperamental constitution and ability to perform in the examination situation. In Leeds we are beginning to think that there is some such connection and that it is one which can be traced.

A study has been made in Leeds of the physique of 700 first year students and an attempt has been made to make an analysis of their temperaments, and their examination results have been studied.

It appears that variations in physique alone and variations in temperament alone make no difference to what a man does in examination tests but what does seem to be significant —and it seems to be significant beyond reasonable doubt—is that what is important is the matching or harmony or congruity which exists between physique and temperament. It seems to come out quite clearly that where temperament and physique are well matched the student stands a good chance of doing well in his examinations and that where there seems to be some lack of correspondence between physique and temperament the student seems to have special difficulties. By well-matching and by correspondence between temperament and physique we mean the fat boy who has the type of temperament usually associated with Billie Bunter or the tough sturdy muscular Rugger man who has all the rugged, masterful qualities expected of him or the weedy skinny man who is nervous, apprehensive meticulous and thoughtful as the lean and hungry Cassius was traditionally supposed to be.

But sometimes, for reasons which are not clear to us the Billie Bunter or the Victor Mature in physique develops a Cassius temperament, and when that kind of thing happens it seems as though this kind of person has to contend with very real difficulties.

These results seem to us to be sufficiently interesting to justify further observation and study and in the meantime we think that they may be of some practical value in helping

us to give to students the individual attention and help about which we have heard this morning

Mr W D FURNEAUX (*London*) I am here to learn from you this morning and not to report results but I want to make it more widely known than it is at the moment that the Nuffield Foundation is sponsoring an investigation extending over 10 years with the object of making possible a systematisation of a mass of information relating to all the problems which you are raising here. We have already been working for five years with the help of 300 of the grammar schools scattered all over the country which supply universities with entrants and with the help of the University of Sheffield which is co-operating with us on a grand scale. Within the grammar schools we collect details of school leaving examination results and various assessments by members of the teaching staff. Psychological tests are also administered on a comprehensive scale at this stage before there is any question of application to a university Within the university further psychological testing is carried out while the details of all examination results are also made available to us.

I do not want to report in any detail upon the picture which is emerging because the experiments are as yet incomplete. However nothing that I have heard this morning is really at variance with the sort of things that we have discovered. In particular I think that what Sir Alexander Carr Saunders says fits in extremely well with the picture we are building up by using psychological tests and other objective measures details of examination results, the assessments of tutors and a whole mass of other information.

But one important point I feel may have been missed and I should like to draw attention to it. It seems to be accepted almost without question that the existing entrance procedures do not correlate very highly with the actual performance in the university subsequently It seems that there is a tendency to accept the difficulties which this raises within the university to assume that this sort of thing is inevitable, and that anyhow it is the job of the universities to weed out people beyond this stage and to classify them.

But it follows from the lack of correlation between the entrance requirements and subsequent success that not only are the universities loaded with people not suitable for degree courses but also that there is a possibility that a lot of people who could profit from a university education are being denied it. It strikes me that this is one of the most important social problems raised by the difficulties which have been discussed this morning I should like to feel that some attention was

being given to this aspect of the problem as well as to the difficulties which the universities themselves are facing

The Rt. Hon. LORD CHORLEY OF KENDAL (*Association of University Teachers*) One point arises out of the observation made by Dr Macklin when he was pointing out that Sir Alexander Carr Saunders in his opening address had stressed the fact that the attainment of the degree is not at any rate a complete test that the university has succeeded with the student I have been feeling that very much for some time and wondering whether some parallel system of certifying success could be developed rather on the lines used in the Admiralty

The Admiralty pay a great deal of attention to a scheme which they have for assessing an officer's moral qualities—using moral in a very wide sense, of course—rather more perhaps than his intellectual qualities, because everyone knows that in fighting a ship at sea those qualities are the ones which count

During the war period I had a good deal to do with the organisation of the National Fire Service. As we had ex-naval officers in high command we adopted the Admiralty method for measuring the qualities of leadership in our officers, and I was very much impressed by it.

I should like to see an experiment carried out in one or two of the universities on the same lines. This could be done by adopting some kind of survey on the lines of the Admiralty test in addition to the degree test. From the point of view of many employers and others engaging graduates, I am quite sure it would be very much appreciated, and I think it would enable us to indicate whether a student had been successful in other sorts of ways besides the particular perhaps rather narrow intellectual way of obtaining a degree.

I also think that a similar sort of system might provide a useful additional test in deciding whether you would accept a student for admission at all into the university A competent headmaster is in an exceedingly good position to apply the Admiralty method. I entirely agree with everything that has been said about the valueless results of interviewing for places. How can one adequately estimate the abilities of a whole series of people passing in rapid succession before an interviewing board ?—I think that Professor Vernon was absolutely right about that—but I feel that when you know your headmasters and can give a certain amount of weightage to their estimates, the Admiralty method would be valuable in assessing a student's ability to derive real advantage a university education

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cessions to the weaker students by offering them rails along which to run If we did not do that I think there would be more failures. My fear is that because public opinion holds that *money is being wasted by turning people out of the universities*, we may go further in the wrong direction and help people to run along the lines which are laid down.

That leads to the last point and that is in relation to something said by Dr Macklin who asked whether students should be told what the universities are after My impression is—this is what I was trying to say at the end of my remarks—that the universities do proclaim what they are after on set occasions, but as soon as the student sits down to normal university life he finds there is a considerable gap between precept and practice, and that what he has to do is something quite unlike what he has been told that university education is. That is what impresses him and not the admirable objectives which he is told are what the university seeks. In fact the universities make concessions to the students in the hope that this will lead to more successes than might otherwise be the case. In fact there are still a considerable number of failures, and I believe that if the universities really did what they hold themselves as aiming to do the number of failures would be still greater

I do not think I need add anything more. I only hope that the criticism which has now become apparent and is going to become much louder will not lead the universities to go in for a system of training, coaching dragging and pushing these persons through their courses with the object of reducing the number of failures. I believe that might be disastrous.

Professor Sir JAMES LEARMONTH, in replying to the discussion said I have three short things to say

One is that as a mere doctor I should define a university and let the students know it as "a place which provides opportunities for acquiring knowledge" I think that ought to help them to develop what initiative they have, but I deprecate very strongly over-coddling them.

Secondly the point is well taken that we have missed some talent As universities, we are not altogether at fault there The supreme opportunity for measuring missed talent came in the war with the officers selection boards. These boards knew what happened to the persons they selected but so far as I know they did not know what happened to the persons they did not select with the exception of a few who were sent up to new boards

Lastly I deprecate the application of too much analysis of figures to these problems. Like any other problem in medicine this is a biological problem. I was very much taken

by a remark made by Sir Edward Salisbury the Keeper at Kew the last time he was with us in Edinburgh he said, When you are dealing with any biological problem, remember that statistics are the cosmetics of biology

The CHAIRMAN I was beginning to suspect myself of a certain amount of mental obtuseness because of a feeling I had that we were not really getting down to the fundamentals of this matter and I think that was probably due partly at any rate to the miscellaneousness of the contributions to the discussion so I was very relieved to hear that a certain research unit was going to spend no less than ten years on an investigation

Nevertheless, we have had some very useful discussion Before we disperse, I am sure you would like me to tender our very warm thanks to the leading speakers and, if it is not too badly out of order I should rather like to couple with their names those of the speakers who have contributed to the discussion from the floor

## THIRD SESSION

SATURDAY AFTERNOON DECEMBER 13TH

## VACATION EMPLOYMENT

*Chairman* D W LOGAN B C.L. M.A. D PHIL Principal, University of London.

*Notes circulated prior to the conference for address by Professor C M MacInnes.*

1 Historical background —

(*a*) The situation between the wars

(*b*) The period of the war

(*c*) The situation after the war

2. Vacation work —

(*a*) Kinds of work

(*b*) Length of working periods.

3. Proportion of students engaged in vacation work.

4. Reasons why they undertake work —

(*a*) Necessity

(*b*) To enable them to buy extras

(*c*) To finance foreign travel

(*d*) For experience etc.

5. *Students attitude to vacation work length of the period* desirable the kind of work etc.

6 Attitude of representative university teachers —

(*a*) That is wholly bad

(*b*) That is wholly good

(*c*) In moderation may be desirable.

7 Advantages of the system

8 Disadvantages.

9. Conclusion.

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The CHAIRMAN I believe all of us here will agree that the persons responsible for organising this conference have done an extremely good job and I can say that without any false modesty because, although I am a member of most of the sub-committees connected with the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals I am not a member of the particular sub-committee concerned with the conference

In many ways they have kept the good wine until the end. Not only have they chosen for the third session what I think is the most interesting topic not only have they secured that both the speakers should be Scots but they have also even managed to provide a Scot as the Chairman! With that unique combination I am sure that nothing can prevent this session from being a success

At the same time having attended a good many of these conferences, I seem to recall that somewhere about a quarter to four the rot sets in and there is a slight drift towards the exit. I hope that will not happen to-day and in an attempt to meet those of you who were thinking of leaving slightly early I will make an offer I think it would be as well if we agreed to close this session at 4.15 p.m., on the understanding that everybody stays until then I gather that this proposal is carried unanimously and without any abstentions I therefore have very great pleasure in calling upon the first speaker to address us—Professor MacInnes.

Professor C M MacInnes M.A LL D Professor of Imperial History University of Bristol To begin with I wish to make it clear that in this paper I am speaking for myself alone for I am well aware that there may be some among my colleagues in Bristol and my friends in the Association of University Teachers who may disagree violently with some of the opinions which I express. In the short space of time that it has been possible for me to devote to the preparation of this paper my investigations have not been as extensive as I could have wished

This subject of vacation work for students has been discussed a good deal of late in the press although I must confess that I have found little that was of much significance in the letters and articles that I have read. Sometimes it seemed to me the writers were inclined to over-publicise the young people concerned and to suggest that full time gainful employment during vacations was entirely praiseworthy One well known journal, however went to the other extreme and suggested that the granting authorities should forbid students to take on paid employment while in receipt of grants for further education Even if it were possible to put this suggestion into effect, I should still hope that no authority would be so unwise as to adopt such a procedure.

During the course of the present year the National Union of Students conducted a vacation work survey but the response was poor and the methods employed in collecting information were not above criticism. Still this document which is based on some 2,396 replies, not all of which are serious replies, contains some useful information. Dr F D Klingender

made a thorough-going scientific examination of the social origins and home conditions of the students registered at the University College of Hull in 1951–52. Among many other interesting topics, he deals with vacation work. This is by far the best document of its kind that I have read, and one could wish that similar investigations were carried out in all our universities. In February 1951 a survey was made by the Grants and Welfare Sub-Committee of the Students Union at Bristol. 877 completed questionnaires were received and this document, again with very obvious defects contains some facts that are useful. The Chairman of this Committee also supplied me with information at my request which he had collected from undergraduates in his own and other universities. The Bristol University Appointments Board and the National Union of Students have both furnished me with statistics of student vacation work.

In addition several of my colleagues have carried out for me departmental inquiries on this subject, and in response to letters I have written, I have received dozens and dozens of replies from university teachers and students both in Bristol and in other universities But I am well aware that my evidence is still far from complete and I present what I say *to you to-day merely in the nature of an impression.*

Paid vacation work for students is of course not a new thing Thus engineers are expected to do some form of work connected with their future profession, for which they are sometimes paid but my engineering friends tell me they are paid badly Social science students frequently work during the summer vacation sometimes for pay sometimes not. Prospective teachers do a certain number of weeks of teaching practice without pay and there are other groups such as scientists, who do paid work. Such activities however as they are definitely part of the preparation for professional careers, lie outside the scope of the present paper We are here concerned only with paid vacation work not connected with the particular course upon which a student is engaged

In Scotland—and I understand that I must be very careful about what I say here—where the situation is so very different from that of England and where courses are organised in a *different manner—I say all that in case my Scottish friends* feel I am suggesting there is any identity—it has long been customary for undergraduates to work for wages during the vacation In Canada and the United States this practice is firmly established. Thus at Dalhousie in my time, for example almost every student took on paid work during the long vacation. Even in the ancient Universities of Oxford and Cambridge poor but able students—I think they were able because I was one of them—before and during the first

world war sometimes supplemented their incomes by coaching the sons of the rich.

Between the wars when unemployment was very prevalent few jobs were open to undergraduates but even then some vacation work was done The post office at Christmas already in the thirties attracted a considerable number and I know that some students including a number of my own pupils were engaged on various kinds of work during the summer vacation I think it is a delusion to believe that those who did not take jobs spent all their time on academic reading

During the war the situation was very different It now became everyone's duty to do something to help on the war effort So post office work at Christmas increased numbers of students took temporary jobs in factories in each of the vacations there were harvest camps of various sorts there were timber camps there was paid fire-watching to be done both in term time and in vacations and there were other opportunities of gainful employment. Even secondary school children now entered the field

After the war the whole scene was changed again and nowhere was this more marked than in the universities. Thanks to the widened system of grants, more students now came up to them from the lower income groups than before the war The new entrants were not only accustomed to harvest camps and work of that sort while at secondary schools but numbers of them had already earned some money by delivering newspapers groceries and other goods even before they left the elementary schools. So when they came to the university they took the idea of working in vacations as a matter of course. Moreover there was a much larger proportion than ever before of married students with family responsibilities whose grants although frequently generous were nevertheless sometimes insufficient. Again it was a time of full employment and there was little or no hostility among working people to students who took on casual or temporary work I also have the impression from the evidence which I have examined and from talks with students—dozens of students—supplementing the many letters which I have received that in the post-war period there has grown up a commendable desire on the part of young people to stand on their own feet. It is my belief that they do not take their parents sacrifices so much for granted as their predecessors did.

As for the suggestion sometimes made that parents of to-day are only too ready to shift the weight of responsibility for their children's maintenance from their own shoulders to those of the all-providing grandmother state I can find little or no justification. Indeed on the contrary I have found much

evidence to suggest that the parents of to-day are as responsible and as ready to make sacrifices for their children as the parents of the past. Many of them are ready to risk their own security in order to ensure the future career of a son or daughter. Thus, for example, I know of a railway clerk who mortgaged his house in order to maintain his son at a university, and such instances could be multiplied many times over. Doubtless there are, as there always have been, some drones in our society both among parents and among students, who expect much and give little—and indeed ladies and gentlemen, it may be that there are some of these also among university teachers and administrators. But I am convinced that such people, in all these groups, are so few as to be of no importance.

What, then, we may ask, is the attitude of the universities to this widespread practice of vacation employment? University teachers and administrators appear to speak with many voices on this subject, but I think I am right in saying that they all agree that students should look upon the vacation as a time for widening and deepening their knowledge of the subject they are studying. I have a strong feeling that only a few pure unworldly souls among university teachers believe that if students were able to do so they would devote all their time to study. A considerable body of our colleagues think that paid vacation work is wholly bad. This is the time, they say, which is meant for intensive reading and the student who does anything else should be reprimanded. Since grants, according to these people, are sufficient or should be sufficient, there should be no financial necessity for such work. Earnings so acquired, they go on to say, are usually spent on unnecessary luxuries, and habits of extravagance should be discouraged. It is pointed out by these people that students who have worked continuously through the long vacation return to the university exhausted and quite unfit for serious academic study.

There is a still larger group that favours vacation work, though few of them, I think, would encourage full-time employment. Thus, a medical professor considers that it is most desirable for pre-clinical medical students to spend some part of their vacation at work, since this will enable them to widen their experience and to acquire a greater knowledge of people. Others hold that such employment is equally desirable for prospective teachers and clergymen, who otherwise would have little or no opportunity of obtaining practical first hand knowledge of the workaday world. These people are not convinced by the contention of those who hold that this need is already met by the period of compulsory national service.

A large number of university teachers and administrators according to my evidence, consider that in moderation vacation work may be of some value. For a young man or woman who has spent a hard term at book work, they believe that a spell of some entirely different occupation may be desirable and if it is carried on in the open air it should be healthful. Foreign language students will unquestionably benefit by working in the country whose language they are seeking to master Various university teachers have written to me or told me of the importance of the wider experience and the greater knowledge of life which can be gained by vacation employment. That is not always the case. Working in an income tax office for three months does not seem to me to add much to one s experience Such people may suggest that for this purpose there should be a few days at Christmas and a week at Easter and perhaps four weeks in the summer but no more Many people without bearing in mind the great differences—and there are great differences—which exist between this country and the New World constantly claim that what has been done in the United States and Canada should be done here Let me make it quite clear that I do not share this view although I am a Canadian and please therefore do not in the discussion, attack me for saying that we should do in this country what is done across the Atlantic.

Turning to the students point of view many of them declare that vacation work is necessary but the word necessary requires careful examination and definition. According to some of my correspondents, cigarettes and mid-morning coffee dances and theatres, are all necessaries and in the broader sense it is possible that this may be true. But I find it difficult to believe that such things are so essential that the community at large should be expected to pay for them. It seems however that there are some students who have no financial resources other than their grants. These may be orphans or children who come from broken homes—and there appear to be a great many of these—or those whose parents are too financially encumbered to give any help.

I take it that the present policy of the Government is based on the assumption that a full grant should be sufficient to enable students to live in term time and during the vacation at a modest but reasonable standard and that grants are graded in relation to the parents income and capacity to assist. As I understand it, the intention is to allow the full grant only to candidates whose parents net income is £450 and under and that as the net income rises, the amount awarded is reduced. There is a feeling, I know among professional people and people from what used to be called

the middle classes including a considerable number of university teachers that they ar penalised under this system. Certainly some members f n own profession are to-day confronted with very grave financial problems because of the increased cost of living and many of them I know find it hard to meet full urn u t costs Indeed, it seems to me that parents with wh t might be considered a fairly high income—£1 000 to £1 500—with a family of three or four children, would be hard put to it to make up the difference between the reduced grant and the full expenses of maintaining one or two or perhaps th ee children at a university

Be this as it may tl most obvious way in which such young people can supplement the assistance they receive from parents and their grants is to work for wages According to the Hull Report excluding working class students, about 81 per cent of the men and 64 per cent. of the women worked for money in vacations While this is not the place to discuss the question of grants in detail, and although I do not feel that I have enough knowledge about the matter to enable me to speak with any degree of confidence upon it, there is one more thing I should like to say on this subject. I am informed that it is the policy of the Ministry of Education to allow assisted students to retain non-recurring grants up to £50 and scholarships of £20 per annum without a corresponding reduction in its awards If this is so then those local authorities that are alleged to reduce their grants by the amount of money earned in vacations appear to me to be acting contrary to the spirit of the Government s wishes and this practice if it exists, is in my opinion to be deplored.

It seems to be the general view of students that grants, at the best are barely sufficient to meet full term-time expenses, excluding luxuries, and that vacation grants of £20 to cover some twenty weeks of vacation in a year are wholly inadequate even for bare subsistence. The writer of the Hull Report believes that if grants for students at Hull had remained at the level of the last session, at least 53 per cent of the awards to men and 67 per cent. of those to women would have been insufficient Last year 34 per cent. of the men and 39 per cent. of the women in receipt of grants could not have maintained the requisite standard of living throughout the year without supplementing their income from other sources. In Bristol, as the evidence—if it can be called evidence—which has been collected in the 877 completed questionnaires shows, the position is much the same. Information I have received from Sheffield and Liverpool leads me to the conclusion that a similar state of affairs prevails in those places, and I think we can assume no doubt with some

hesitation that with variations, the situation is not very different in other places.

The National Union of Students is of course far more forthright in its criticism of the policy of granting authorities, but while I should be disinclined to accept all of its evidence at its face value it does seem that some students to-day are compelled to work during the vacations because their grants and their other financial resources if there are any are insufficient to maintain them during term time and in the vacations at the modest standards to which I have referred.

I think I should point out here that the majority of students—certainly the majority I have consulted and I have consulted several hundreds picked here, there and everywhere—frankly recognise that the community cannot reasonably be expected to pay for their extras but at the same time it is my view that such extras should be available to them if they are to lead a full life.

I cannot more than guess at the number of those who are compelled to work in vacations in order that they may remain at a university. According to the survey of the National Union of Students 64.2 per cent. of those who replied said they worked from necessity during the vacations, but only 13 per cent. stated that this was their only reason for working. But, as I have already pointed out the term "necessary" as used in this document is extremely elastic. In the view of the writer of the Hull Report the proportion of students who stated that they had to work all or most of the vacations in order to supplement their grants sufficiently to keep themselves was 6 per cent. for men and 1 per cent. for women. I should hazard a guess that if a complete investigation were made, the position in universities generally would come pretty close to the Hull standard though some institutions would show a very much higher percentage no doubt and some a lower percentage.

Again, in the survey of the National Union of Students, a surprising number of students state that the chief reason why they worked during the long vacation was because they were bored with nothing to do. The Sheffield Union however informed me that this opinion is not borne out by its experience but I am bound to say that in several of the letters which I have received from my own and other universities boredom was seriously mentioned as one of the reasons for taking on vacation work. This appears to indicate that university teachers have not been so emphatic as they might have been in making clear to their pupils that vacation study is an essential feature of the university life.

A large number of students take jobs in order to buy clothes. A man may want a dress suit and father will not stand it and

they do farm work of different kinds at home and abroad they work in hospitals and other institutions they are taxi drivers, hotel waiters porters shop assistants, canteen waitresses nursery governesses they coach they assist travel agencies they are stewards, stewardesses and members of engineering staff aboard ship and so on. No young person I have so far encountered seems to have tried his hand at journalism, which in my remote youth I myself found amusing although not lucrative I spent a part of one vacation as a junior reporter on a Western Canadian newspaper the editor of which informed me when he took me on that he was not so much concerned with facts as with excitement. But as he made me cover a vestry meeting a baptist convention an anglican synod, a methodist women's home missionary society conference memorial services and funerals it taxed my ingenuity to produce much excitement for him.

The National Union of Students believes that eight weeks is about the average for a whole year but my impression is that it is rather more than that. While I am unable to give a precise estimate I should say—and this is a rough guess and can only be a rough guess unless we have a complete investigation—that something like 70 per cent and perhaps more of our students are so engaged at some time during the year At Hull, for example the figures are 86 per cent. for men and 68 per cent for women Although the figures for some universities may be much lower—and I know that some are—it is my belief that others are about the same level as Hull

The pay of students varies considerably—from £2. 10s. a week to £10 I think the £2 10s. jobs are those which university teachers obtain for their pupils. The average would appear to be in the neighbourhood of £4 to £5. The National Union of Students puts it at £5 This may seem unbelievable but I know one man who increased his income by several hundred pounds He organised a concert party at the seaside in which he played and he made a turnover of £1 200 for the summer This must have netted him a sum of £300 to £400 at least I know of another man who cleared £90 but he did a great deal of overtime work. These are the giants It is impossible to make any reliable estimate of the average total earnings but certainly these commonly range from £10 to £50 a year In passing may I point out to any of you who may be interested that I understand there is a hotel in London which will clock you in at 10 p.m. and out at 2 a.m. for a fiver—the work being dish-washing

This brings me to the question what is the effect of vacation work upon students and their careers? As we might expect heavy work or work of any kind through the whole

vacation leaves little time for study although there are some very hardy students who assured me that they were still able to do some reading It is my belief however that full-time work, whether for a short or for a long period renders any serious intellectual effort during that time difficult if not impossible According to the National Union of Students survey 43 per cent. of those who replied stated that vacation work interfered with their studies. It is only fair to the students to point out here that the period of work is sometimes prolonged against their own wishes. Thus I am told that employers are often disinclined to take on anyone for a period shorter than eight weeks. The student is therefore confronted with the problem of deciding whether he should do more work than he believes to be desirable or than he wishes to do or no work at all but, as he wants the money for some reason or another he usually decides to work for the eight weeks.

At the same time, the majority of the students whose opinions I have heard or read appear to consider that though it may take too much of their time the experience of vacation work was valuable and enjoyable. This I can readily believe, for if I may be forgiven another personal reference, I worked for part of one vacation in a logging camp and later in a lumber camp in the Rockies, and although I made practically nothing out of it, the work was very invigorating and I shall never forget that delicious feeling of physical well being which came after a fairly hard day's manual work in the open air Moreover my association with the lumberjacks considerably enriched my vocabulary and this has subsequently proved of great value to me in dealing with recalcitrant undergraduates and, in particular with rowing men.

With the first of my conclusions, no one here will disagree. No man or woman, under any condition should be required to take on paid employment during term time I also assume we are agreed that no student should be compelled to undertake work covering the greater part of the long summer vacation and the whole or part of the other two merely in order to be able to remain up at a university This group I believe to be small, but it unquestionably exists and must be taken into consideration. In addition to these students, there are many it seems, whose grants must be supplemented in some way or another if to use the words of the Minister of Education they are to obtain "proper benefit from a university course" Many of them therefore work.

As I have said, I believe, however that parents should and that many of them do help their children to make up the difference between their grants and what they need. Often this assistance is readily given, even at a sacrifice. I also believe that it is unreasonable to expect the community to

pay for students luxuries. It does not seem to me to be a very great hardship for any able-bodied young man or woman to be required to earn enough to buy these things by a period of invigorating work during the summer vacation. While the wish to be independent is commendable I cannot accept the view that an independence acquired entirely at public expense is necessarily virtuous.

Work at Christmas and Easter is much more extensive than I had previously thought and there are a few students who work solidly through both of these periods. This is a practice which should be discouraged. In the summer the most common period would seem to be about eight weeks which in my view is much too long, while work carried on for the whole vacation is to be condemned. It interferes with the proper carrying out of university reading it tires the young people so that they return to the universities unfit for strenuous academic work. The writer of the Hull Report however considers that the time spent in work for money is usually limited in the majority of cases in order to leave a sufficient reserve both of time and of energy for the vacation study which is recognised to be necessary. This view I have found substantiated in many replies I have received to my letters and also in interviews I have had with students.

In my opinion we should make it very clear to our pupils that vacation reading is essential for this fact does not seem to be wholly grasped by some young people who to-day come from homes unacquainted with the ways of universities. It is undesirable I think to increase the amount of set work to such an extent that there will be no time left for anything else for this would be unjust to those who work from necessity as well as for those plodders who are not in the first flight of academic capacity. We should recommend to our students that if they feel they must work, they should not prolong it unduly and I think we have a right to advise them about the kind of jobs they should take as well as those they should avoid. But having done this it is difficult to see what else we can do in the matter except to treat them as responsible people. I assume of course that students will be employed only when there are jobs to spare and after the claims of regular working people have been satisfied. Student labour if it exists, must be supplementary to and not a cheap substitute for any part of the normal labour resources of the country.

But provided this is borne in mind provided the requirements of the university are fulfilled and also provided that the students return to us physically and mentally rested and ready for work, it is my belief that paid employment for a period of not more than four weeks in the summer preferably in the open air or abroad and of not more than two weeks

during the Christmas and Easter vacations combined may be of some considerable value. The student thereby earns pocket money, he widens his experience of men and affairs—or at least, he can if he has the right sort of job—and academic standards need not be lowered. This is a flood which we cannot stop but we can control and direct it if we are wise.

SIR DAVID LINDSAY KEIR, M.A., LL.D., Master of Balliol College, Oxford: I am here to start a discussion and to do so within ten minutes even if some of these notes of mine are sacrificed. I remind myself too that this is the final session of the conference and that you, Mr Chairman, have told us of some of its perils. I well remember at the closing session some years ago Sir James Duff warning us that we had now entered those shallow waters that betoken approach to the desired haven—our return trains home—and that it was through difficult soundings that one navigated after half past two on Saturday afternoon. But in that there is reassurance to all who take pleasure in sailing on the sea—or have to start discussions: the shallower the water, the choppier the waves. In these ten minutes I must indicate at least some of the points on which I am in the strongest agreement with Professor MacInnes, and on these, if they are unacceptable, I hope this audience will take us up.

The first is that in my view—which I think is also his—this practice of paid employment being taken by university students *during vacations has come to stay*. It *seems to me* to be an inevitable consequence of three forces whose impact we have all felt in our relations with the students committed to our care: democratisation, full employment—which means that there are always jobs here and there to spare—and a welfare state supported by a redistribution of income which has greatly diminished the freedom of choice open to students as to everyone else. Until some fundamental change is brought about in the whole world in which the universities are at work, vacation employment is something to which we must learn to adapt ourselves. As Professor MacInnes has said, this is a flood, and in it we are caught.

Certain contrasts are implicit as a background to this discussion, but Professor MacInnes and I have this also in common that we both come from countries in which the notion of the vacation job, so far from being unfamiliar, is accepted and traditional. He has told you about Canada, and perhaps I may take up what *he suggested* about my own country; for I can very well remember in the University of Glasgow in the days before the first war, when none of the influences which have made our present problem was yet in existence, almost everybody did one week's Christmas work in the post office

and there were among us Viking-like heroes who took jobs as pursers on the Clyde steamers during the summer season showing a combination of nautical and social skills which one greatly envied. Further back still there was in one's mind the recollection of the old Scottish academic year divided into two approximately equal parts—that which started in April and ended in October being one long continuous period of vacation employment unpaid on the farms which were the homes of so many students Thus I did not approach this problem with any such predispositions as may perhaps be in the minds of some who will take part in this discussion or any narrow and even unreal picture of a bygone, aristocratically ordered university society in which well-to-do young men occupied all but four weeks of the summer vacation in broadening and deepening those studies to which they were presumed to have been introduced while term was on That kind of university life and society so far as it ever existed has gone with the wind There is little profit in instituting contrasts between the present dispensation and that which vanished from us forty years ago.

Our own problem is, I think, inescapable and one must not ask *whether* vacation jobs should be taken, but *why* they are taken Here I endeavour to present some of the answers which my inquiries from my own undergraduate friends and their teachers have elicited. Among them one may note provision for holidays—and I pause for a moment to deplore the habit of expecting to take one or more annual holidays abroad as a student. In my time and I dare say the time of many here one saved up year after year for that holiday abroad until at last it came and I cannot help asking whether liberal indulgence in school parties on the Continent for long periods—sometimes spent, I think in a rather hurried kind of sight-seeing which leaves little serious impression upon the mind—has not created a habit repeatedly requiring an indulgence which it is sometimes difficult to accord. Among the other reasons given was the need to buy books. This came fairly high and that is not surprising when the cost of books especially in certain branches of study has trebled and more compared with what we had to pay Thirdly there were some cases of just making ends meet and here there is significance in the contrast between the practice of the Ministry of Education and that of local authorities whose maximum grant for the year may fall well below the standard which the Ministry accepts and recommends. I do not quarrel with the local education authorities for their attitude towards vacation grants as such but there is a marked discrepancy over the year taken as a whole between men financed from these two different sources There seems to be one exception to the

Ministry's practice. I will quote, if I may, a letter from a man who was placed in the Second Class in Classical Moderations after the normal five terms and who has therefore proved himself an able and diligent pupil. He writes:

> I have worked on the following since I came up: post office sorter, hotel waiter, income tax clerk, fruit packer and hop picker. The time I have taken up on this has been about ten days to a fortnight in the short vacations and four to six weeks in the long vacations. Wages have ranged from £3 5s. to £7 with an average of about £4. While I was engaged in Mods. in Classics I was able to do this and just do my work as well. Now that I am working for Greats it is not at all easy. Of the money I earned, most of it was not spent on absolute essentials but on such things as entertainment—pictures, Christmas presents and travel, not abroad. Now that my grant has been reduced I am obliged to use this money to pay my landlord's rent. I have five more terms before Schools. Whether I shall continue work during vacations or possibly devote all the time to academic study depends on the Ministry of Education.

He is among the last survivors of the class of people who came up on teacher training grants, and his letter throws a light on this particular question which none can disregard. This is not a working-class student of the kind of which Professor MacInnes reminded us, but a public school boy, the son of a retired officer living on a pension which has not been increased. This is indeed not a class question.

Briefly to mention the effect of national service, to which Professor MacInnes referred, it very commonly is that when the young man, whether as a ranker or an officer, has for two years not been a charge on his parents, he finds it exceedingly hard to come back to being a charge on them during university vacations and tries to provide for himself.

One student admitted that he wanted a change of occupation during the vacation—only one out of scores who answered my inquiry. The young men we get do not in fact demand a regular recurring release from their books. In their interest and application they seem as good as we ever had.

What price is being paid for all this vacation employment, and is it worth-while? I think there are more reassuring aspects of this problem than have been put before us by Professor MacInnes. Many boys arrive at their university with a ready made idea that they will take jobs in vacation, but the *hold of that idea over them diminishes from year to year*. The majority may be job-takers in the first year, *only* a fraction in the second, and hardly any in the third. Whether

it is due to a greater respect for learning or the near approach of Finals I do not know but that is how it works out in practice Nor does vacation employment necessarily mean a paid job in every single vacation. I should have thought that that kind of thing if one enquired into it would turn out to be pretty rare certainly not I think, true of the majority though I agree with Professor MacInnes that about 70 per cent of our students are at one time or another engaged in paid vacation work, and I agree again about the duration of such employment.

I want, however to add a comment which he did not I think, offer about the nature of the jobs they take. Too often they take those which interfere most completely and harmfully with intellectual pursuits. Students do not want office jobs which last too long are not well paid and do not involve any overtime rates. Here are some specimens of what is being done gathered in a single afternoon of enquiry technician in a chemical factory bus conductor on summer holiday services in Lancashire waiter earning £18 a week fruit canner—this was interesting as a seasonal occupation in which you can work on a Sunday which is double time and go straight on to the Monday and get double time again because your shift is unbroken, so for two days work you get four days pay another example was builders labourer again with plenty of overtime. One must recognize that long hours and heavy manual labour make two things impossible—first, getting on with prescribed reading and secondly reading outside one s own subject less than ever can such books be read when several weeks of the vacation are used in this kind of work

Such, it seems to me, is the situation which has been forced upon our students, because society as a whole has raised for them the question whether the price of a packet of cigarettes or some other simple indulgence or a book or a holiday or even paying one s way for necessaries does not involve the sacrifice of precious leisure and the search for gainful employment. These jobs are done for money That is the main reason with a slight qualification here and there Wider experience of life is a by product. Nor can one be sure whether this experience has much worth it may be said that some such experiences are quite useful but I do not quite accept that they all are

Recognising what the main motive is and what the consequences can be we must, as university teachers, face the facts. We must come in as advisers and friends to our students on this matter as on others. If we press for a ratio of one member of staff to say a dozen students I do not think we deserve it or live up to our job unless we give counsel and warning too

on vacation employment. And finally reverting to this morning's discussion I am less impressed by statistical enquiries about the failures and successes of students than by the feeling that their failures are also our failures and that if we got to know what sort of difficulties they face about their vacations as well as in term-time and how they arise surely we should get to the root of some of the problems which impede their academic progress and their success in university life.

The CHAIRMAN I am asked to remind all present that they are welcome to take part in the discussion whether official delegates or invited guests. I am also asked to request you to come up to the platform and to preface your remarks by giving your name and the institution with which you are connected.

Dr E. P HODGKIN (*Western Australia*) May I thank you for inviting me here It has been very much appreciated. My one reason for speaking is that I come from a university and a country where vacation employment is the rule rather than the exception and where I think it is true to say that a large proportion of the students would find it difficult to go through the university at all without some employment during the vacation. Incidentally the sums earned by students may be pretty considerable. My own son earned about £90 for six weeks work [illegible] [illegible]

The question I want to ask is that if students do not work during the vacation what do they do? I am not convinced that a great proportion of them, at least in their earlier years at the university are yet able to direct their own studies adequately during the period of vacation

This ties up with our discussion this morning I do not think that during the vacations students have the encouragement or possibly the opportunity and facilities to continue *their university studies. I should be the last person to suggest* that we should have them back in the vacation throw open our laboratories and be there to give them advice and perhaps lectures during the vacation, but if they are to use their vacation time adequately instead of getting a job then they need more direction. That is the position in our university although I do not know whether that is so in this country but certainly in my own student days here I cannot remember that we were given sufficient direction to enable us to work anything like the whole of the vacation periods.

Dr G N BURKHARDT (*Manchester*) I wish only to emphasise one or two points already made particularly by Professor MacInnes and to refer to the cross connection

between our discussion and the discussions this morning and yesterday. Yesterday we were discussing methods of enabling students to get fuller benefit from membership of a university. The fundamental problem is that of the use of time and energy—and cross connecting with what was said this morning I think that is one of the most difficult problems which our students face on coming from school.

On the whole the use of their time at school has been fairly closely planned. Planning is diminished in the Sixth Form but the change should be greater when they come to the universities. In universities where the system centres on lectures and laboratory work students may think it is rather like the school system and may be deceived into believing that they can continue with the modest level of initiative to which they have been accustomed at school. They may need help in making the adjustment. One of the reasons for the failure which we discussed this morning is, I think, their lack of skill and of advice in that matter. Talking to our freshmen at the beginning of the session this year I outlined what the university offers to them and felt it particularly important to emphasise that they need to think in terms of a full day, a full week and a full year in disposing their time and energy amongst their university activities.

I agree entirely with Professor MacInnes that the key practical point in this discussion is the length of the period for which they take outside employment. I am not a bit worried that 70 per cent. or 80 per cent. of them take some employment in vacations, but I am very concerned that the *average* period seems to be as high as eight weeks.

On the question of financial pressure the main causes of the difficulty which I wish could be diminished are those where local authorities fix their major awards at a level which is regarded as a reasonable minimum level of maintenance and then fix their grants at a lower level still. For example, last year a student of 24, living in lodgings, had a grant of £140 with no other resources. In Manchester lodgings cost on the average about £2 17s 6d per week without lunches, so clearly you cannot live on £140. That required not merely a modest level of supplementation by vacation employment which could be undertaken without unreasonable competition with vacation study. This is a matter which needs further urgent attention.

The last speaker referred to the use of vacations for study which is the positive consideration. I certainly think our students need more guidance on this and a considerable change of attitude on their part, and sometimes on their parents part. They also need more effective access to books than is possible at present.

Miss C. E. MALLEX (*Durham*): I hesitate to add statistics after what Sir James Learmonth said this morning, but I think these are interesting. They are the vacation work figures for students at Newcastle and one point which I would bring out is that these figures for Newcastle throw greater emphasis on work for the whole vacation than the opening speaker suggested. While I agree that many students feel the need to earn extra money during the vacation I am rather concerned about the time they spend on it.

These are figures for the last full session (1951-52) and before I give them I should explain that the students have had, for the last two years, a very efficient vacation work organisation which is run as a sub-committee of S.R.C.

The college has a student population of nearly 3,200. The number of applications received by the vacation work organiser was 2,054 and the jobs found were 1,600. Of these 1,082 were long vacation jobs, 582—that is more than half—of which were taken for the whole vacation, 348 for about two months, and 152 for one month or less. The rest of the 1,600 jobs I referred to were done in the Christmas and Easter vacations or were small part-time jobs during term. Students are beginning to look for these occasional term time jobs. For instance, they sell ice cream at fêtes or on the beach during the summer term. They also do baby watching. The organiser puts advertisements in the local press from time to time reminding the public that students are available for baby watching. Men as well as women apply for this work.

My figures for the year 1950-51 are not so complete, but during the long vacation 597 jobs were taken, of which 182 were for the whole vacation, 163 for about two months and 252 for one month or less. There is, as you will see, a growing tendency for students to work for the whole vacation, and the figure of 582 out of 1,082 strikes me as very disquieting.

Miss N. A. MACFARLANE (*Birmingham*): I do not want to take up time in going over ground which has already been covered, but if I do not comment on what has been said it is not because I do not agree substantially with a great deal of it. I want to comment on two points which have been put but seem to me to have been dismissed rather lightly. They are not perhaps the most important factors, but they count for a good deal.

I was struck by the laughter which greeted Professor MacInnes' account of students who said they worked at paid jobs in the vacation in order to be able to do their book work. I can only hope that the laughter was evidence of that kind of mirthful shock which is the method by which paradox brings the truth home to us, because in some cases that

statement is quite true. It is particularly true of women students and especially for those who live at home during term I have been told by a student that she wished to earn some money in order to go back to her room for a fortnight in the vacation to do some work.

That is partly because of lack of access to books, but even more because of conditions of working at home. I am not going over the ground of the lack of a quiet room in which to work because it is my experience that having a quiet room in which to work is not the whole answer There are nowadays domestic claims on one's time and there is the general atmosphere and let us be quite frank, the general temptations to do other things when you are at home in your own society

But for a great many students nowadays it is bound up with the attitude of home to intellectual work and university work and the assumption that the vacation is a holiday Unless you have a book in your hands or are writing the whole time or even if you have you are perhaps thought to be shirking your duty to offer to help in the home or to go out and earn some money

Lack of access to books is important—more important in some subjects than in others. In some subjects you can take home pretty well all the books you want but in others you may need a lot of books but not to read right through them —you may need to be able to look for what you want in them That is difficult without access to the library

There is also the question of the home attitude to your giving up the time or to understanding what you are doing That ties up with another remark which created amusement —that students took a job because they were bored at home It is perhaps unfair to assume that that is a commentary on our own failure to teach them what their work requires because boredom is not necessarily caused by having nothing to do It may be due to not having people there who are interested in the same things as yourself

I think that is very much the case where students are about the only people in their homes who have any interest in ideas. They very soon find that they do not talk the same language as those with whom they grew up and went to school and although they themselves have not ceased to be interested in the affairs of those people the girls in particular find it assumed that they are superior persons with no interest in the matters which interest the people in their environment In those circumstances they soon feel very lonely—and loneliness makes for boredom

Those are both genuine motives for this desire to do something else and to raise the money with which you can say "I am going abroad I am going climbing in Skye without

having to ask for the finance—as well as asking your parents permission—because your having earned the money gives you more right to say that you are going to do these things.

Dr FRED FAIRBROTHER (*Manchester*) I wish to emphasise the points which have been made by Professor MacInnes and Dr Burkhardt about periods of employment of eight weeks or longer Professor MacInnes directed his remarks mainly to the man who took paid employment not connected with his profession there is however also the problem of the man who attends vacation courses connected with his profession. A number of industrial firms and the Ministry of Supply run vacation courses, some of which are six weeks long and some eight weeks. In the case of the eight weeks course, either a man stays for eight weeks or he does not go at all.

It is obvious from the care taken by those who run these vacation courses that they are trying to do their best. Clearly some think that an eight weeks course is desirable. It would be a great help if a body like this would direct their attention to the undesirability of a long period of vacation training, because if a man spends eight weeks in what is probably quite an arduous training course and then has a holiday there is very little of his vacation left for reading

Professor S H BEAVER (*North Staffordshire*) I have just been confronted with an unusual problem. Professor MacInnes said that in days gone by local authorities were accustomed virtually to forbid students from taking jobs in vacations.

Professor MACINNES No

Professor BEAVER That was the impression I got. But it does not matter to my argument. Recent evidence in my possession suggests that there has been a change of attitude. A student recently came to me with a document from his local education authority—a very enlightened county borough—which contained three paragraphs among others. They said that they recognised that in subjects like geography and geology students were expected to do field courses in the vacations, and they would help to finance them secondly in respect of chemistry medicine, engineering and other such subjects students were normally expected to take part-time occupation during the vacations. They continued (this is a paraphrase not a direct quotation) If, however you can produce a certificate from your tutor that it is necessary for you to study at home in vacations, we may be prepared to make an extra maintenance grant. That is something quite new which raises problems.

What kind of a report does the local authority want? Do we say This is an excellent student in which case the local authority might say In that case he does not need to work in the vacation and we need not make him a grant Or do we say This is a very bad student who must do home work in his vacations in which case the local authority might even threaten to suspend his grant entirely I do not know what the education authorities attitude will be I have not yet provided the report in question, and I should like to know whether anyone else has evidence of a similar change of attitude by local authorities and, if so what they propose to do about it

Professor F S DAINTON (*Leeds*) I think we all welcomed the remarks of Professor MacInnes and his very careful and detailed analysis of this problem I must confess however to being more than a little worried both by his words and by those of the Master of Balliol in so far as they accepted vacation work as a permanent feature of our university life and likened it to a flood which was unlikely to be contained. During the meeting I have been wondering whether practical measures could not be adopted not merely to contain the flood but to reduce time spent on vacation work to reasonable proportions. In my experience most of the bad decisions—including that to do an excessive amount of vacation work—made by under graduates spring from their lack of knowledge of the true purpose and function of a university and therefore of what a university expects of them. This ignorance is particularly understandable in the provincial universities which are often situated at the centre of a large grouping of industrial towns and, as a previous speaker mentioned, the only marked difference in the mind of the undergraduate living at home between the local grammar school and the local university is that the former is reached by tram and the latter by train or bus It is therefore especially important to tell our fresh men as soon as they arrive what universities are about and what their privileges and obligations are as members of a university I have tried talking to undergraduates along these lines—telling them that this is probably their only opportunity for reading and reflection that a sustained effort in their own field of study is the best return they can make to individuals and authorities who have enabled them to come and the implications which these facts carry concerning the amount of vacation work which should be undertaken. These notions are often received with mingled incredulity and *surprise but a beneficial effect is sometimes apparent, as* for example when a man after discussion with a member of staff reduces the amount of vacation work he undertakes

despite hardship or other pressing reason. The freshers conference makes a good opportunity for these talks, but possibly a better method is that adopted by the West Riding Education Authority This authority provides the opportunity for *all* those within its area about to enter a university *to live for two or three days together at Grantley Hall* and to hear a variety of speakers who are expert in the diverse ways of many universities, talking about many aspects of university life.

If instead of taking steps of this kind we accept vacation work as a normal activity it may soon become full time employment throughout each of the vacations. This would have many serious practical consequences, e g either longer courses or a lower level of attainment at the end of a course of fixed duration but the most serious consequence is that universities would before long be regarded merely as institutions providing formal teaching for thirty weeks of the year

Dr H F HUMPHREYS (*Birmingham*) I have only one point to make I am a little puzzled to understand why two months vacation employment should be universally condemned. The sort of students I know most about are medical students, who in their clinical years habitually work in hospital for at least two months of the long vacation. I cannot remember that I ever had more than a month s holiday in the summer and medical students to-day are no better off.

If we agree that it is desirable or at any rate inevitable that a medical student in his clinical years should work at a hospital for two months in the long vacation why is it considered so extremely bad for say an engineering student to work for two months in a factory and at the same time be paid for it ? It is true that the hours may be longer and the work have little or no relevance to the next examination but he is learning how other people live and labour—a valuable lesson for any budding professional man or woman.

Sir RODERIC HILL (*London*) There are one or two points which I should like to add to the discussion although much of the ground has been covered and one does not want to repeat what others have said I agree in the main with the views of Professor MacInnes and the Master of Balliol. In Imperial College we are concerned only with the faculties of science and technology which includes all branches of engineering and it surprised me to learn that people were so anxious about the time a student should normally expect to work in the vacation I think our students fall a little outside Professor MacInnes category among our engineers and our chemists

we regard it as quite natural that a student should spend two months or more learning about the human side, the organisational problem, costing and what the workshop floor looks like. When he has dealt with his formulae and so on all through the year it seems essential that he should see a bit of real life how things happen in industry so to speak behind the scenes.

The pay varies considerably—between £3 and £4 in Europe to £10 in America and £18 in Israel. Most of our students say they do not do vacation work for pocket money they do it mainly to pay the cost of their travel and for a few modest comforts on their way. To go by ship to Israel, if a student wants to see any of their electrical undertakings, may cost £150 and if he earns £18 a week he is getting somewhere near it.

We have an organisation which may be familiar to some —known as I.A.E.S.T.E.—the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience. I think I am right in saying that it was initiated by a member of staff at Imperial College some 35 years ago. He has developed it with the help of one or two others in the college. It started as a college activity now its work has become international. The office of the Association deals with 19 different countries. The exchange of students, both foreign and our own, is arranged through I.A.E.S.T.E. for nearly every university in this country but the work is confined to technology and science.

The problem of vacation studies, which started as a trickle may be a flood but I do not think it needs more than normal attention. The flow has to be controlled but it is a legitimate part of modern education. The reports which all these students of whom I have spoken have to write on their return are of great interest. The big industrial firms and the Ministry of Supply are developing a system to deal with vacation students. Our Superintendent of Vacation Studies says that, through the Association visits of Canadian students have recently been arranged to American firms on terms more financially favourable to them than were possible before. That has come about through a British organisation, which has operated smoothly in the differing social environment of many countries. It is an example of something which sprang from very small beginnings.

I admit that I have dealt solely with students in science and technology and that the problem of the arts student the man reading history or literature is different. But as long as vacation studies bring him into touch with human beings in responsible positions, and if he earns enough to free him from trivial anxieties and is reasonably looked after the educational effect of vacation studies can be wholly beneficial

Mr G N Flemming (*Ministry of Education*) I do not propose to contribute to the discussion, because I have no experience which would be relevant—and you all know too much about our [illegible] But I do want to take this opportunity to say Thank you —first, for being able to be here and to listen to the accounts of your experience which have been poured into this discussion, and which will be directly useful to me Secondly—and this has some relation to the point raised by Professor Beaver—because the discussion has confirmed me in the view that we are right, as far as the Ministry's grants are concerned, in not trying to determine in all cases what they should be by a rigid rule, but in allowing a number of questions particularly that of grants for vacations, to be a matter of individual thought and individual recommendations in particular cases. We have introduced that for the first time in this current year and we are getting very helpful recommendations from a number of members of university staffs I am sorry that we have to burden them in this way but this afternoon's discussion confirms me in thinking that we are right and we are very grateful for the help that we are getting

Professor F L W Wood (*New Zealand*) I do not know whether the following point would occur in this country but it is a practical matter in New Zealand. One additional reason why young men and women take vacation work is that they are often faced with the choice of doing so and then working full-time during the university session, on the one hand, or on the other hand earning their living during the university teaching session. I can think of one example—a young man of quite good quality—whose grant all except 5s a week, was absorbed by fees in the university hostel. He got busy in the long vacation and earned something in the region of £100 which enabled him to concentrate solidly on university work during the rest of the year

We have been fighting hard in New Zealand to do something about the problem of part time work, and we feel that, if we put too much pressure on people like that we might even put greater obstacles in the way of serious university work by encouraging an evil which is in some circumstances worse than the one we are attempting to cure. This problem of the maintenance of students is complicated by the fact that in New Zealand almost anyone who completes a satisfactory secondary school course is entitled to admission to a university. This does not necessarily mean admission to a specialist faculty, such as medicine for example, for the medical people are a problem of their own as I understand is the case in certain other countries. We have however a very high

proportion of university students in relation to the population of the country and this is a situation which we have not yet fully digested In particular we have not yet coped with the financial problem of maintaining at a university such a high proportion of our young people As a community we have not yet found means of giving every student an opportunity of full time study which I am pleased to see you take for granted in this country This is a matter partly of social habit and partly of the comparative absence of that margin of wealth which might enable parents to maintain their children as full-time university students. I suspect that that margin has been cut away to a greater extent in some parts of the New World than it has in some parts of the Old World.

Young people are therefore forced sometimes reluctantly and sometimes with a degree of enthusiasm which astonishes me to get busy with their hands earning means for their own university education A stimulus of this kind, although it leads to over-commitment can have a beneficial effect on those qualities of initiative which sometimes drive a student through a university course with enterprise and with an added appreciation of its value which can be of great benefit to the student himself and to the university as a whole It does not necessarily produce brilliant examination results—but, referring back to the mechanical tests which underlay so much of the discussion this morning *I do not believe that the only test* of a man's success or failure at a university is his proficiency at passing a mechanical examination

Sir David Lindsay Keir in replying to the discussion said There are only two things I have to say The first is to express the appreciation I feel at having the privilege of opening this discussion and listening to the very interesting contributions which have been made to it Engineers scientists and doctors have seen and dealt with this problem for a long time but to many on the arts side I think we can agree it is a comparatively new one though with it we must learn to live It brings a new opportunity to us if we do not simply turn our backs on it and suppose that it does not exist or is wholly bad if it does, or that it will soon settle itself I think we should feel we can find a new usefulness in helping to plan the university careers of our young men and women in vacations as well as in term time I hope a good many of them will ask me whether it is good or bad to spend one's time in this way or that during vacations. After this discussion I feel that in no circumstance should I say they ought to do no paid vacation work. I am sure it is very much a question of degree and of kind.

In mentioning my second point I am sure I speak for

everyone when I say that London University has put us even more deeply in its debt by supplying the Chairman for this afternoon's discussion. I should like to move—and Professor MacInnes will support me and I know you will carry the proposal by acclamation—a vote of thanks to Dr Douglas Logan for having presided over this meeting

Professor MacInnes in replying to the discussion, said May I say to begin with what a nice lot of people you are? I expected to be treated very much more roughly than I was. In fact, I was not treated roughly at all.

I was asked what the students do if they do not work. What did my son do? Played cricket. Played tennis. Came with the old man on Continental trips. Did a considerable amount of reading I think that is the usual sort of thing

I am sorry I missed Newcastle that was a bad shot of mine for I should have got more information from there. I was very interested in those statistics. As for Miss Macfarlane, we "Macs" stand together I was surprised as she was, at the laughter which greeted my remark about boredom. Naturally speakers are always glad when people laugh at anything so I did not cavil at it.

I was perhaps quite wrong, but I ruled unpaid work out of my terms of reference. As I said, I was concerned with work done by people for money outside their courses and having no relation to their courses. I will not enter into the war between the engineers, scientists and medicals as to whether it is a good thing or a bad thing to do work connected with the profession I will leave that to them

The word flood seems to have been unhappy What I was trying to say was that we could contain it if we were wise. I do not think anyone questions that it is a flood and somebody seemed to think it was the sort of thing we could not control but of course we can handle it.

The point made by Dr Humphreys and also by Sir Roderic Hill, was outside my terms of reference.

May I in conclusion most sincerely second the vote of thanks which has been proposed to the Chairman by the Master of Balliol?

The Chairman I am sorry that we are five minutes overdue. I have only three things to say First, I would like to thank you—the audience—for staying so long. Secondly our sincere thanks are due to the speakers for a stimulating discussion. Personally I felt that they got away with rather a lot and I felt very inhibited by being in the Chair The third thing is that tea is now being served in the Macmillan Hall.

At previous conferences in the post-war period the following were the subjects and opening speakers —

### 1946

The Relation of the Home Universities to Colonial Universities and Colleges (*Miss Margery Perham*)

The Humanities and Science (*Sir Richard Livingstone Professor Sir Lawrence Bragg*)

The Universities and the Training of Teachers (*Sir James Duff*)

### 1947

The Expansion of the Universities (*Sir Richard Southwell*)

The Basis of Selection of University Students (*Professor Sir Godfrey Thomson Sir James Mountford*)

The Proposal to Establish a Representative Universities Council (*Lord Simon of Wythenshawe*)

### 1948

Report on Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, 1948 (*Dr J F Foster*)

University Graduates in Commerce and Industry (*Lt-General Sir Ronald Weeks*)

Selection of Students for Open Scholarships and Awards from Public Funds (*Sir Philip Morris*)

*Continued on opposite page*

## 1949

Sir Walter Moberly's book, "The Crisis in the University" (*Sir Walter Moberly Professor L. J Russell*)

The General Education of Students (*Professor F T H Fletcher*)

The Place of Technological Education in University Studies (*Professor Sir Lawrence Bragg Sir Edward Appleton Emeritus Professor Andrew Robertson*)

## 1950

The University as a Regional Focus (*Professor W Fisher Cassie Professor T S Simey Professor Sir Lionel Whitby Professor Ross D Waller*)

National Service and the Universities (*Mr C E Escritt Mr T R Henn*)

Overseas Students in British Universities (*Sir George Allen General Sir Ronald Adam*)

## 1951

The Procedure for the Selection of Students for Admission to the Universities (*Principal J S Fulton Professor Wilson Baker Dr C F Harris Mr L. P Wilkinson*)

Universities and the Fine Arts (*Professor Thomas Bodkin*)

Student Health (*Dr R. W Parnell*)